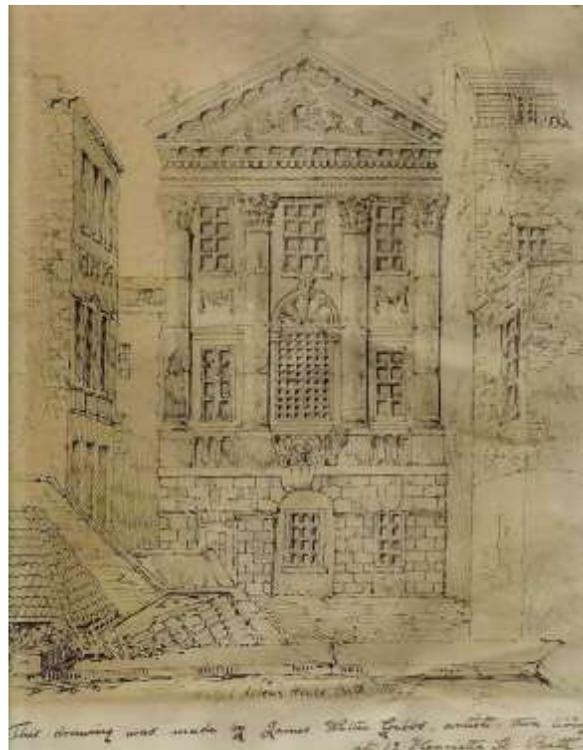


The Survey

of Bath and District

The Journal of the Survey of Old Bath and Its Associates

No.22, October 2007



THE SURVEY OF BATH AND DISTRICT

The Journal of the Survey of Old Bath and its Associates

Number 22

October 2007

CONTENTS

City News

Archaeology

District News

Reports from Local Societies

Correspondence

Publications

Notes and Queries

Bath Union Workhouse, the Chapel, John Plass and St.Martin's Hospital W.H.A.Chislett

Big and Little Thumper Revealed Elizabeth Holland

Becker Family Pictures

The Forerunners – the Old Post House, Ralph Allen's Town House, and Marshal Wade's House
Elizabeth Holland

Bath and the Ornamental Public Fountain Mike Chapman

Bath Municipal Allotments: Part II Malcolm Hitchcock

Friends of the Survey: List of Members

Editors:

Mike Chapman

51 Newton Road, Bath BA2 1RW tel: 01225 426948, email: mike@chapman76.fsnet.co.uk

Elizabeth Holland

16 Prior Park Buildings, Bath BA2 4NP tel: 01225 313581

Typesetting: Anthony Brannan. **Graphics:** Mike Chapman

Front Cover Illustration: The former Hot Mineral Water Fountain, Terrace Walk. Photograph: Mike Chapman

Back Cover Illustration: The Ralph Allen Town House, 1882, by James Walter Gibbs. Published by Courtesy of Bath Record Office.

CITY NEWS

Bath Record Office

This year sees the 40th anniversary of the Record Office, established in July 1967 under Robert Bryant. Since those early years, although the Archive still occupies the same basement rooms in Bath's Guildhall, great changes have taken place. The archive collections and the number of users/enquiries have both grown by a massive 800%, and the availability of new technology has enabled the creation of the Record Office's own website and online catalogues.

To mark the anniversary a small display is currently on view in the Guildhall entrance-corridor, using news items from 1967. Visitors can draw their own conclusions when they learn that topics of the day included: plans of a new Southgate redevelopment; debate on a possible city casino; and Council instructions on what not to put in your dustbin.

This past year has seen a steady arrival of additions to the archive, most notably two maps. One is a hand-drawn coloured plan and schedule of the Kingsmead Estate by G.P. Manners in 1821. The other is a large coloured plan on parchment showing all of the city centre and titled 'A Map of the Dissolved Priory or Abbey of Bath belonging to His Grace the Duke of Kingston 1750'. The two maps have long been in private ownership but are now on loan to the Record Office where they are proving very welcome and useful tools to local research.

Users of the Record Office will have seen a change of staff this year. Mrs. Rosemary Boyns has taken the place of Mrs. Lucy Powell for the latter's maternity-leave, and we congratulate Lucy on the birth of a son George.

Colin Johnston
Principal Archivist

The Spa

The Spa is running successfully and we have had favourable reports. A taxi driver told Elizabeth that he had visited the rooftop bath four times and loved relaxing in the warm water. When asked about the effect of the gulls, he replied that they did not come near the bath. Perhaps ultra-sound has been installed to keep them away.

On 10 July, at Wells, the Spa received another award, for its regenerative effect.

Mayor's Guides

Former Friend's committee member Gill Cope was pictured in *The Bath Chronicle* 17 July, with other Mayor's Guides, featuring the summer programme of walks.

Subjects included Thomas Gainsborough, the Walcot area, Victorian and Georgian architecture and other architectural walks including features like fountains, statues and gates. *The Chronicle* reported that each year 70 trained volunteers entertain more than 30,000 local residents and tourists. Information about the service can be obtained from the Mayor's office, 01225 477469.

Museum of Bath at Work

On 4 July 2007 the new Hudson Gallery was opened by the Rev. Christopher Hudson. The gallery was financed by a grant of £25,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund and features exhibits by eight local societies, with displays as well on Walcot and the City Centre. The museum's Summer Special Newsletter, 2007 contains a centre spread reproducing *The Chronicle's* article of 5 July, with illustrations from the exhibits.

On 21 November Stuart Burroughs will be lecturing on ‘Bath in Particular’, the title of the display, as part of the Museum’s series of Lunchtime Lectures. Further details of the series can be found at www.bath-at-work.org.uk.

Donald Insall Associates

Messrs. Donald Insall Associates have now celebrated their 50th year of practice and their 10th year established in Bath. They possess seven offices across the country, with over 120 Architectural Conservation awards gained. Our pages have already mentioned awards for work on the Spa. The anniversary brochure mentions ‘the beautiful oval Cross Bath – sacred site of one of Bath’s three hot mineral springs’, John Wood’s Hot Bath, the Hetling Pump Room and ‘part of Baldwin’s unique Grade I listed Bath Street’.

The Hexagon, St. Martin’s Hospital

With a picture of the old frontage of St. Martin’s Hospital, Combe Down, Future Heritage has advertised a conversion named ‘The Hexagon’, a selection of one, two and three-bedroom flats, 25 in all, due to be completed in December. Two of them, with their own gardens, sounded particularly choice.

Abbey Church House

The Bath Hotel and Spa Company has bought the lease on Abbey Church House, with the intention of turning it into a conference centre to complement the five-star hotel which the company is creating in the former Gainsborough Building, once known as Bath Tech.

We shall be very happy to see the media reporting the correct history of this house. It was not a leper hospital – there was a poor folk’s hospice nearby which later became called a leper hospital, though it too was not so. The present western part seems obviously to have been built by John Clerke, elected MP for Bath in 1547. The eastern range of buildings, which go beyond the part now known as Abbey Church House to include what is now called Hetling House, i.e. No.2 Hetling Court, was built c.1590 by Robert Baker, John Clerke’s nephew-in-law. The house was not owned by the Hungerfords in the Civil War as the lease was held by the Ivy family. The Hungerfords did not ‘entertain royalty’ there and the building did not ‘ring with the laughter of Cavaliers’: the relevant Ivy and Hungerford families were Puritans.

As Rama declares in the *Ramayana*, ‘Truth is still our ancient way’.

ererererererererererererer



Opening of Dolemeads in 1901.

Malcolm Hitchcock will be giving the Lunchtime Lecture to the Friends on 25 October, on Council Housing in Bath.

ARCHAEOLOGY

Mike Rowe, Cotswold Archaeology

Summary of Excavations at Peasedown St. John, 2005

An archaeological excavation was carried out by Cotswold Archaeology during the early months of 2005 as part of the construction of the new Bath Business Park alongside the A367 at Peasedown St. John.

An archaeological evaluation carried out during the early stages of the planning process identified a cemetery, of unknown date, in the north-east corner of the site. This remains preserved and was excluded from any potentially damaging ground-works and was not subject to any further archaeological investigation. However, the rest of the site was sub-divided into six targeted areas, which were fully excavated.

The earliest identified evidence of human activity on the site comes from the Middle Bronze Age and consists of the partially surviving remains of two human burials and a single cremation. The burials of this period are distinct from later ones, in that the deceased are interred in a crouched position in a small pit, and not extended in a grave like modern burials. It is possible that these burials may have originally been accompanied by some overlying earthwork, such as a burial mound, as many such monuments have been ploughed-out in the historic period.

Possibly the main period of activity spans the Middle to Late Iron Age, evidence from this period consists of land clearance, in the form of burnt out tree stumps, and some small ditches which may represent field or land divisions. A large ditch 25m long and 5m wide was also discovered on the east side of the site, which appears to have been backfilled very soon after it was excavated. The function of this large earthwork is unclear, it may have been part of a defensive circuit started but never finished. There is some evidence for the Peasedown area being a focus for political rivalry within the *Dobunnic* tribe in the 1st century BC before the tribal 'capital' was established at Bagendon in Gloucestershire.

Part of a rare Middle Saxon enclosure was also identified within the development area. Approximately 20m across and at least 30m in length this may be the remains of a small farmstead. Within the enclosing ditch a large number of postholes were identified, some of which formed distinct rectilinear shapes. Although we can't know for certain what these things were, we can speculate that they may have been drying racks, animal pens, storage sheds or similar such structures, which would have been located down slope of a possible dwelling which may have lain beyond the site area.

Evidence of activity during the late Roman period and in the 11th-13th centuries was also recorded. Although it was not extensive, it was enough to suggest the presence of settlement nearby. A further nine human burials were also excavated and were most probably part of the cemetery in the north-east corner of the site. The burials could not be dated as the surviving bone was not suitable for radio-carbon dating, but a medieval date is most likely for this cemetery, possibly associated with the medieval settlement at Eckweek, which lies only 250m to the north. It would seem that the empty field alongside the A367 which caught the developers' eye was not always so, and the development has revealed over 3000 years of life and death on a Somerset hilltop.

Cotswold Archaeology July 2007

MoLAS (Museum of London Archaeology Service) has been carrying on excavations on the Southgate clearance site, though we have not yet received their report. It will be interesting to see whether their suggested site for the Horse Bath is the same as the one proposed in the booklet on the Southgate area brought out for the Survey of Old Bath by Mike Chapman. Excavators told a Friend of the Survey one day that they had discovered the Ham Gate. As the site of the Ham Gate is buried under a substantial block of buildings not in the demolition area, this seems unlikely. Mike's overlay at the back of the Southgate booklet shows the position of the gate.

For the Time Team programme on Prior Park gardens see 'Publications'.



The Southgate area during clearance, taken from the air. Courtesy of Multi Development Ltd., UK

DISTRICT NEWS

Midsomer Norton

A new local history group has been set up at Midsomer Norton entitled the 'Midsomer Norton Society'. The aim of the Society is to link Midsomer Norton's history with the town as it is today, and to have an influence on the way it develops in the future. As well as a regular meeting programme of events, a range of project groups has been formed that members can join. These include:

Midsomer Norton Fair Day: involves resurrecting the medieval fair day, granted by Royal Charter under Henry III in 1242. **River Somer Group:** the focus here is not only the removal of the rubbish and silt from the River Somer in the town centre, but also putting in place a long term plan to manage this key feature. **Vicarage Tunnel:** to find the mythical tunnel from the old vicarage to the church. It's part of Midsomer Norton folklore – and it is hoped to determine once and for all if it exists! **Jubilee Lamp and Fountain:** presented by benefactors to the town on the occasion of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, both have since disappeared. Perhaps these key townscape features can still be found, or at least replaced. **St.Chad's Well:** currently in a state of dilapidation, this was once the main source of drinking water for the town, and was made into a memorial to the only son of the owner of Norton House, killed in the Crimean War.

Full membership is open to those living in the two wards of Midsomer Norton North and Redfield, but anyone living outside this area can join as an Associate Member. Membership is £5 per head per year, running from June to June. There is a standard attendance fee for members of £1. Certain events may require a ticket at a higher price. For those joining part way through the year: £2.50 for 6 months, £1.00 for 3 months.

Contact: Hilary Jones, Brookes Newsagent, 74 Redfield Road, Midsomer Norton, BA3 2JP, or visit their website: www.MidsomerNortonSociety.co.uk

Silver Street, Midsomer Norton

A stretch of woodland adjoining Silver Street to the south of the town, recently designated a Local Nature Reserve, contains various streams, a pond, and a mysterious masonry structure. Since the latter appeared to have interesting historical associations, Mike Chapman was commissioned by B&NES to carry out a survey and the necessary research to identify its origin.

The wood was planted as a landscape feature when Norton House was built below it in the late 18th or early 19th century, together with this structure, which served as a cistern or spring-head to provide a water supply for the new house. What makes this unusual is that it appears to have been converted later in the 19th century, presumably when the municipal water supply was brought in, to use as an ice-house.

For this purpose, the oval outline of the brick-built cistern, now somewhat damaged, was covered with a stone vault and buried under a mound of earth to provide insulation against the outside air. The ice would have been obtained in winter from a shallow artificial pond nearby which appears to have been created especially for this purpose.



REPORTS FROM LOCAL SOCIETIES

The Survey of Old Bath

The Survey of Old Bath is a research venture which first adopted its title in 1979. Its aims are to study the topography of old Bath, and the lives of its actual citizens. The Chapman family has been chosen as its sample group, although it welcomes information on other Bath families. The Survey has published a number of historically reconstructed maps, brought out with funding from B&NES, and also other booklets and articles. It works on commission as well as on a voluntary basis.

The Survey's new booklet on the Spa buildings through the ages was launched on 15 May 2007 at the Spa Visitor Centre with a lecture by Mike Chapman to a capacity audience of about 30. Several members of the Friends attended and a number of copies of the booklet were sold. It is discussed further under 'Publications'.

Elizabeth has completed her study of the houses mentioned by Richard Jones as the first important works created with Ralph Allen's stone. A report appears in this journal.

At the AGM of the Friends on Friday 20 April, Mike Chapman gave a well-received talk about public fountains in Bath, both those which have existed and those which were proposed but did not materialise. This is part of a general study of the waters of Bath on which he is engaged. The scientific side of the thermal waters has of course been covered in a volume edited by Dr. Kellaway, then Consultant Geologist. The Survey has brought out a booklet on the Spa buildings and hopes to combine with Giles White to produce a longer study on this topic, with plans and pictures. Mike has turned his attention to other waters. In *The Lost Streams of Bath*, published for the Survey, he covered the courses of streams, and he also made a study of the river for B&NES. Following public fountains, he hopes to deal with public lavatories, such as those along the Bum Ditch. Whether domestic water supply will be included is not yet decided.

The Survey is joining with the Widcombe and Lyncombe History Study Group in bringing together all the available information on Holloway, south of the Churchill Bridge. Holloway was damaged in the Blitz and afterwards became part of the 'Sack of Bath', together with adjoining streets such as Calton Road. If it had survived it would have been one of the most fascinating spots in Bath.

Holloway was part of the ancient route into the city before the creation of the Wells Road, and the Bishops of Bath and Wells would have made their final descent into the city along it. It slopes sharply to the east in order to make that descent easier; before the coming of the railway it ran right down towards the Old Bridge. It was the road down which Leland travelled when he visited Bath.

Medieval deeds still survive mentioning holdings in Holloway, for instance four cottages in 'Holeway, outside Bath bridge, in Mulestret' (Mill Street) in 1365. In 1408 the City owned a cottage there. Holloway was a significant part of the life of the old city and very relevant to the Survey's objective of recreating Old Bath.

A number of individual studies have already been made, especially by members of the WLHSG. It is hoped to provide a survey covering the whole life of this ancient way. It is hoped that Allan Keevil, who has written on the Fosseway, the Berewyk Estate, the Ingle Brook and the Barton, and whose valuable study of the Cornwell appeared in the *Survey* 13, will assist us in assessing the early years. At the time of the demolition in the sixties Elizabeth photographed some of the old houses, one of which was labelled as a site office, and even brought home lumps of stone (definitely oolite) as mementos of house construction.

Everyone is invited to take part, whether members of the Friends of the Survey and/or the WLHSG or not. Recollections, plans, pictures and photographs, and so on, will all be welcome.

The Friends of the Survey of Old Bath

The Lunchtime Lecture of the Friends was held on Thursday 26 October 2006, as usual in St. Mary's Church Hall, Bathwick. The President, Dr. John Wroughton, spoke to an appreciative audience of about 40 on his new publication, *Life and Strife in Tudor Bath*, illustrated by a number of slides. The book was available for sale at the meeting; a review by Peter Davenport was published in our *Newsletter* February 2007.

The AGM of the Friends was held on Friday 20 April, again at St. Mary's and again with about 40 persons present. Resigning after his two years as Chairman, Colin Johnston described them as successful ones both for the Survey and the Friends. Stephen Marks was elected as the new Chairman and made a short speech of thanks in reply.

Mrs. Ann Cridland, Treasurer since the founding of the Friends also resigned, and was presented with flowers by Colin. Mike Chapman thanked her on behalf of the Survey for all she had done, and presented her with a garden token (with a plant also to follow). At the close of the meeting John Ennor was co-opted as the new Treasurer and Bill Chislett as a member of the Committee. The post of Secretary is still vacant and volunteers will be welcome.

After refreshments, Mike Chapman spoke on the public fountains of Bath, which was much enjoyed by the audience. He has been invited to repeat the talk for the Bathwick Society.

On Monday 18 June Mrs. Sheila Edwards led a number of members of the Friends around the Old Cemetery at Bathwick. Stephen Marks has provided the following report:

On a threatening evening which held off for fifteen of us we gathered at the entrance to St. Mary's Churchyard on 18 June 2007. We were ably guided by Sheila Edwards along the well-designed trail which has recently been laid out to explore an excellent and interesting selection of memorials. Gravel paths, strengthened with a plastic netting to support wheelchairs, have recently been laid, held within raised timber edging so as not to disturb the ground and shallow tree roots. We were given a very attractive leaflet with detailed descriptions of 21 of the memorials and a key plan.

One of the most interesting memorials for me for its association is the Pinch family tomb close to the east end of the chapel: this family provided two of the City's most important architects, John Pinch the Elder and his son John Pinch, the former the architect of the now-derelict chapel.

The churchyard was closed in 1856, and until recently was in very poor condition, but with aid from the Heritage Lottery Fund careful but not too intrusive clearing work was undertaken and the present scheme carried out. Entrance is by the gateway in Henrietta Road, and it is open daily until dusk. You are asked to keep to the paths, take litter away with you, and shut the gate!

The Bathwick Local History Society

The past year has been a very enjoyable and successful one. Several newcomers to the Bathwick area have become members of the society whilst we have happily retained many old friends, sending our membership numbers above the one hundred mark.

Since last autumn our programme has gone through topics ranging from Bath stone and the quarrymasters of Combe Down, to the house where Jane Austen once lived. We also heard about the early years of the Post Office, Brunel's Railway, Bath Municipal Allotments and the devastating floods of past years.

All of the above subjects have a link with Bathwick which was illustrated by each speaker in various ways and the talks were so good that it is difficult to single out any one as being of extra special interest. However the talk given by Marek Lewcun, entitled 'The Clay Pipe Makers of Bathwick and Somerset 1620-1920' is perhaps that one.

Marek had previously given a version of this excellent talk to the Friends of the Survey but he managed to make it even more interesting to us in Bathwick as he was able to tell us about a couple of the clay pipe makers who actually lived and worked in this parish, and their tombstones, with readable inscriptions that still exist in the old Bathwick Churchyard in Henrietta Road. Members were also invited to bring any relevant items for Marek to identify on the evening and again this added to the interest especially as a fragment of clay pipe with the initials 'A.J.' (Abraham Jones) was produced by a member, having found it in their garden in Sham Castle Lane.

Abraham Jones:

Sacred to the Memory of Ann, the beloved wife of Abraham Jones of this Parish, who died 21st Feb 1855 Also Abraham Jones who died 18th August 1855 aged 51 "Their loss is severely felt by their sorrowing family who are bereft of the kindest parents" "We do all fade as a leaf" Isaiah LXIV Ch. 6v.

The second tombstone mentioned is to John Laffar, who after the death of his first wife married for a second time:

In Memory of Ann, wife of John Laffar of the City of Bath, who departed this life Feb 16th 1818 aged 37 years Also to the Memory of John Laffar, husband of the above mentioned Ann Laffar, who departed this life Oct 8th aged 62 years Also Sarah Laffar widow of the above who died Nov 21st 1858 aged 81 years.

For enquiries about the society: telephone 01225 463902 or 480389

Sheila Edwards July 2007

The Combe Down Heritage Society

The Society continues to thrive and diversify and we now have some 180 members. With the stabilisation of the stone mines reaching a halfway mark this summer, work towards the conservation of stone mining heritage has taken up much of our time and energy. As proposed in the original Planning Application for the mine infilling, we want to set up an interpretative site here in Combe Down and have a small part of the archaeologically important mine available for future access.

Our researches continue on a broad base into:

- The Oral History of Combe Down
- The History of the village shops
- The work of William Smith
- The History of Tucking Mill
- A Survey and description of the Drungs
- A Survey of historic public realm features
- A record of all buildings in Combe Down
- Surface features of mines

These activities are run by the Committee with the involvement of a number of members. Progress reports and details of all our activities are available at the Stone Mines Information Centre.

William Smith, the 'Father of English Geology', after completing his survey for the Somerset Coal Canal, later opened a quarry in Summer Lane, overlooking Monkton Combe, and a stone 'manufactory' by the canal at Tucking Mill. Research by our President has highlighted information from his archive at Oxford, helping to explain further why this business venture failed and he ended up in a debtors' prison. Various publications relating to this work are in preparation.

Tucking Mill features again in our work for we have been given the delightful memories which Stanley Wicks, who was born at Tucking Mill in 1910, wrote of his childhood. Later this year we will publish these, edited by the Chairman who has added a number of illustrations and some suggestions on walks that might be had in the area.

Our archive has been considerably enhanced this year following the receipt of Lottery funding for scanning and storing various images digitally. We have acquired some 250 35mm. slides of the late Peter Addison, well known for his book *Around Combe Down*. Together with many pictures and slides from members, these are forming an important historical resource and the new format facilitates their publication and display.

We have had five public meetings which include five lectures, four by guest speakers, which have been well attended and a lively forum for discussion. We have also run several Guided Walks, one of these, now an annual event, being part of the 'Bath Open Week' programme, and a noisy Christmas Quiz in a local pub. As part of our wide interest in industrial archaeology, we had a successful excursion by canal to the Claverton Pump and plan another to the Butcombe Brewery in the autumn. The Society publishes a quarterly Newsletter. Education is an important element of our work and we are involved with the local schools.

In collaboration with the Jewish Community, with whom we formed the 'Friends of Bath Jewish Burial Ground', our researches continue and a 'Tombstone Trail' is in preparation. At an 'Open Day' on the Jewish Burial Ground, also part of 'Bath Open Week', we were pleased to welcome about 250 visitors, some from outside Bath and important snippets of the site's history were gleaned. Work continues on what was Bath's only Jewish cemetery, though we have as yet been unable to solve the 'ownership' problem which is holding back our plans for restoration.

We acknowledge support from the Bath and North East Somerset Council, the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Stone Mines Community Association.

Malcolm Aylett August 2007

Contact

Malcolm Aylett, Secretary, 13 Williamstowe, BA2 5EJ
phone: 01225 833681 email: M.aylett@homecall.co.uk



The Fingerpost opposite the King William IV.

As part of a recently completed general survey project of milestones and turnpike markers, the Combe Down Heritage Society hopes to secure funding towards restoring and repainting this post.

Photograph: CDHS, Addison Archive

The Widcombe and Lyncombe History Study Group

The group's programme began on 26 April when Stuart Burroughs of the Museum of Bath at Work gave a talk on the Odd Down Windmill at the Fuller's Earth site. This was followed on Wednesday 23 May by a visit to the Central Library to meet Ann Buchanan, the Local Studies Librarian.

In June the group joined with the Widcombe Association in celebrating the Widcombe Festival. On Monday 4 June Margaret Burrows gave a talk at the Widcombe Junior School on the changing parish, with slides of various spots to be seen on the planned walk around the boundaries. 'Beating the bounds' took place on Saturday 9 June, organised by Sarah Lewis of the Widcombe Association. About 100 people took part, and the Natural Theatre Company assisted in raising spirits. A picnic lunch was taken at the Paragon School, Lyncombe Vale where Alistair Durie and John Brushfield provided an exhibition of maps of the Parish.

On Saturday 30 June an exhibition on people of mark in the history of Widcombe and Lyncombe was provided by Doreen Collyer at St. Mark's Community Centre, in connection with the Widcombe Association's Art Trail. John Brushfield assisted in mounting the pictures, and a table commemorated the work of John Hawkes, with a number of his drawings and topographical paintings, while another table displayed the work of Janet Lonsdale, artist and illustrator. Music was provided, and readings from works such as those of Horace Vachell of Widcombe Manor, author of *The Golden House*.

On Thursday 12 July the group inspected a selection of material from the archives stored in St. Mark's Community Centre, St. Mark's Road. On Saturday 22 September Mary Hawkes invited members to her home on Widcombe Hill, to discuss its reconstruction from part of the premises of the Hare and Hounds by John Hawkes, though this meeting had to be postponed. Planned for 11 October is a talk by Malcolm Aylett on the Combe Down Stone Quarries, and for 15 November several short talks. On Wednesday 11 December the group will meet at the home of Margaret Burrows, 11 Widcombe Crescent, for the traditional mince pie evening.

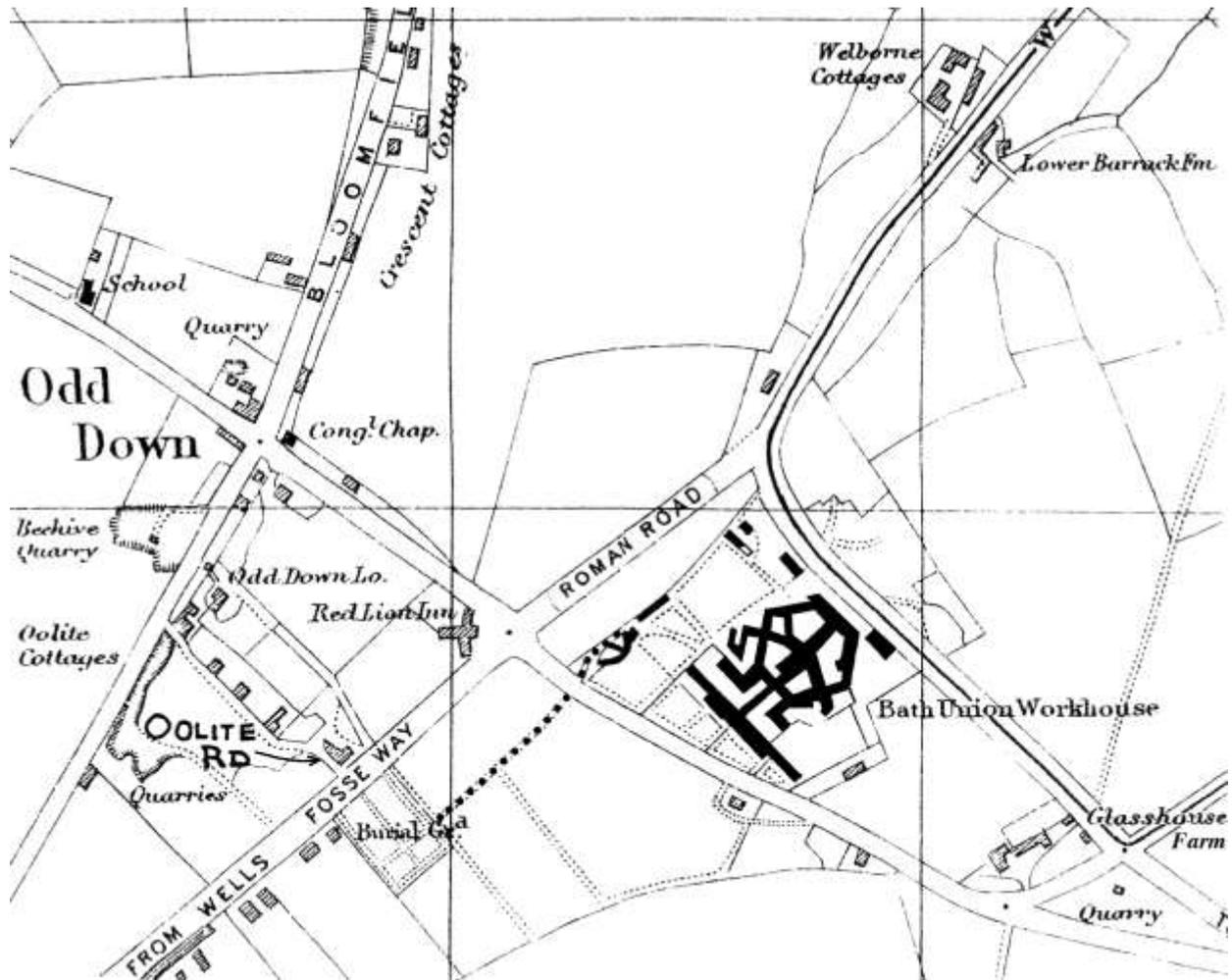
The WLHSG is joining with the Survey of Old Bath in the Holloway project discussed above under the report from the Survey. This project originated from the archives evening in July. Discussion arose over the maps displayed as to where Bridge Place lay. It was shown in Dolemeads on the 1880s O.S. but there was reason to believe a Bridge Place also lay in Holloway. Subsequently Bernadette Kondrat discovered from the Internet that there were three Bridge Places, one in Dolemeads, one in Holloway, and one in Locksbrook. It was suggested then that Holloway should be mapped out and everything known about it assembled.

This will include studies already made by past and present members of the WLHSG on the Blitz, sanitation, census returns, photographs of Holloway, and so on. It is hoped that one day a book or exhibition will result.

The Streetlore project was intended to record all these minor street names around Bath. Many interesting photographs of street signs and gates were taken, stored in the Record Office and at St. Mark's, but there is still scope for researchers all over Bath to record these fleeting names, as it is hoped to do in Holloway.

Group contact number: Margaret Burrows 480749

The **History of Bath Research Group** is concentrating on preparing a website. It is hoped that this site will give contact numbers for local societies. The **South Stoke Local History Group** is proof-reading Volume I of the Churchwarden's Accounts and hopes to be able to report further next year. Their project began with Volume II, already reported, as it was easier to transcribe.



Bath Union Workhouse, from a directory of 1905. The Glasshouse site can be seen to the right. The heavy dotted line shows the route taken by coffins to the new burial site opposite what is now Oolite Road, passing through a passage under the Frome Road. When closed, the ground held 3,182 bodies. No stones mark the graves though the undulations can be seen on frosty mornings or when the sun is low.

CORRESPONDENCE

Letters Page Editor: Leslie Holt

The policy on correspondence has now changed and letters on controversial subjects like planning applications will now be considered for publication. Please see the item under 'Notes and Queries'.

October 2006

Dear Elizabeth,

Warmest congratulations to you and Mike on another superb edition of the magazine of the Survey. The cover is most impressive! The series will provide a valuable source of information for future generations – not to mention the interest it provides for current members. Thank you both for your hard work.

Best wishes,

John Wroughton

October 2006

Dear Elizabeth and Mike,

This is just to thank you both for the bumper edition of the *Survey*. It really is splendid, not just because of the colour covers but thanks to the variety and quality of the notices inside.

I know that a huge amount of work goes into the editing and production of such a publication. Congratulations!

Susan Sloman

June 2007

Dear Leslie,

In March, earlier this year, Hazel Symons and I were invited to visit Denise and Michael Walker in Oxford. We were made very welcome in their home, though sadly Michael wasn't too well on that day.

Their terraced house, attractive and with character, had been recently modernised by their predecessors into a light and airy home with some innovative colours and designs. It has a small garden at the back which leads into a nearby park where Michael has an allotment.

They live within walking distance of Christchurch Cathedral, and after lunch in the new development of the castle area, Denise took us on a most interesting tour of the city. The history of the city itself and the colleges, many closely packed into the centre, each with its own garden, is fascinating and beautiful. We ended our walk-around in the Cathedral where both Denise and Michael are involved with the church, and Denise arranges flowers.

We took a bus back to Lake Street where we had a welcome cuppa before having a pleasant drive back to Bath. It was nice seeing our friends again and we are glad to know they are nearer their family and are settling happily in Oxford.

Yours sincerely,

Priscilla Oliver

July 2007

Dear Leslie,

Further to my article on Poor Houses in *The Survey* No. 20, by a strange coincidence I find I have in my possession a book published 1825 called *The Justice of the Peace and Parish Officer* by Richard Burn, edited and brought up to date for 1824 by Sir George Chetwynd. Mine is Vol.4 out of five volumes.

The cases are chiefly concerned with rates and charges on the rates. Paupers could be given certificates to leave their parish, for instance if they were apprenticed or hired out to someone and doubts arose concerning to which parish they now belonged.

In *Rex v. St. Peter and St. Paul* (the Abbey parish in Bath), c.1782, there is a case about a pauper, William Hill, who had been removed with the other paupers from the Abbey's old Poor House near Milsom Street to the new Poor House of the Abbey and St. James at Millbrook off Widcombe Parade (illustrated on p.35 of the *Survey*). However it appears that the parish of Lyncombe and Widcombe had returned him to St. Peter and St. Paul, saying that his certificate to leave that parish was not valid, even though the poor were maintained in the Poor House without any charge to the parish of Lyncombe and Widcombe. Lord Mansfield and another lawyer discussed the certificate system at length with the final decision 'both orders were quashed' (apparently meaning the decision to deport him and the decision of the sessions court upholding this).

The next item deals with the order that no spirituous liquor shall be sold or used in any house provided for the poor, i.e. rum, brandy and whisky. Bill Chislett's article for the new issue of the *Survey*, which I had the pleasure of looking at in advance, reports that a quantity of wine and beer was consumed in the Bath Union Workhouse. These were of course much safer than water at that time.

There is also a case about the rates due on Magdalen springs in Holloway, one brought against Bath Easton about a pauper who had travelled with his employer, leaving doubts concerning to which parish he now belonged, and one against St. Michael's, Bath, concerning a pauper (possibly a bankrupt builder?) who had put his two houses in trust to be sold to pay debts, but had then decided to move into one of them with his wife. All these cases throw a light on how the Poor Laws were actually administered.

Yours sincerely,

Alistair Durie

Editors' Note: the Workhouse. Following our letter in the *Chronicle* about the Holloway project, someone has forwarded extracts from the *Chronicle* about Thomas Bullock of Widcombe, Watchmaker and Keeper of the Cold Bath. He was robbed of a number of watches in April 1770. A George Strickland was later convicted of the theft. In September 1770 when parish officers were removing Strickland's wife and children to the Workhouse (obviously the City one), they found 39 of Bullock's watches under the floorboards of Strickland's house in Milk Street – Strickland was reprieved from hanging but was ordered to be deported to the New Colonies (America). One Bullock advertisement carries the legend, "Over the Old Bridge, Bath".

August 2007

Dear Elizabeth,

I am very interested in your Holloway project. There are some fine images at the Building Bath Museum from the 1950s. I hope to be digitising them in the near future for *Bath in Time*.

Yours sincerely,

Daniel Brown

Sincere thanks to our above contributors for taking the time to write these interesting letters. All readers are of course encouraged to write in at any time, on any relevant subject. Please send to: Leslie Holt, 'Westwinds', Hayesfield Park, Bath BA2 4QE.



**Frontage of former St.Martin's Hospital, from an advertisement for Future Heritage's conversion, 'The Hexagon'.
Published courtesy of Future Heritage**

PUBLICATIONS

The Survey's booklet, *The Spa Quarter of Bath – a History in Maps* is now available from Mike Chapman and on the bookstall at meetings of the Friends, price £15. This is the result of a project promoted by Friends member Giles White, former PR representative for the Spa, and is attractively designed in a modern format by Holly White. It contains seven progression maps of the Spa buildings through the ages, drawn for the project by Mike Chapman. i.e. Roman, medieval, c.1706, early 1770s, early 1830s, 1959 and 2005. Though they look effortless, they are the result of many years study of the Spa by the Survey. Each historical period has an overview, and the different buildings are then listed separately. It is hoped that one day *Records of Bath History* will provide a gazetteer of the different house sites shown around the Spa buildings.

Giles White is the author of the pictorial guide *Hot Bath*, now available in bookshops. It is hoped that the three authors will be able to combine one day to produce a longer study of the Spa, with pictures, plans, etc, developing the research they have gathered through the years.

At the time of writing, *Records of Bath History* Vol.I is being prepared for publication. A limited number of hardback copies will be printed for the Record Office and libraries, while the text will be available on CD. The Ralph Allen map has been redrawn by Mike and is presented in colour. Diagrams by the late John Hawkes have been included in the text of the book, showing the Bennet estate, the Magdalen lands etc.

Peter Little of Twerton has brought out a booklet called, *A History of a Few Chapels around Bath*, price £5.50 (ISBN 10 0-9525177-1-X. Also ISBN 13 978-0-9525177-1-9.) It covers 16 chapels, including Laura Chapel, Bathwick and St. Mary Magdalen's, Holloway, with other less well-known spots, comprising an useful reference book. Available by application to Mike Chapman.

Cathryn Spence, formerly Curator of the Building of Bath Museum, is now working on the Public Catalogue Foundation, listing paintings held in public buildings. The Bath and Somerset edition is scheduled for March 2008. Other editions can be found on www.thepcf.org.uk.

Earlier this year efforts were being made to find new sponsors for *Bath History*. In its last years it was owned by Bath Archaeological Trust and when this ceased to exist its sponsorship naturally did as well. The last issue was privately funded. Meanwhile, *The Survey of Bath and District* has been expanded, at least for this issue.

Dr. Susan Sloman, 'An eighteenth-century stonecarver's diary, identified - Eight months in the life of Thomas Parsons (1714-1813) of Bath', in *The British Art Journal*, Vol.VII, No.3, Winter 2006/7 (pp.4-13). The issue is available at £10.50 per copy: the address given is Central Books, 99 Wallis Road, London E9 5LN, 020 8986 4854. A copy is available in Bath Central Library, with other addresses.

Dr. Susan Sloman, a member of the Friends of the Survey, is well known for her work on Gainsborough, on artists' studios in Bath, and other facets of 18th century art. This article enlarges on the diary she was able to identify at the Huntingdon Library, San Marino, California, while on a visiting Fellowship in 2004, and provides greater detail than could be conveyed in the talk Dr.Sloman recently gave the Friends.

The journal is of particular interest because it describes Parsons' methods of working, and also includes much information on life in Bath. With her usual meticulous care, Dr.Sloman has assembled a mass of information about the Parsons family and its output. She mentions for instance two of their properties, 'gardens' north of Magdalen Chapel in Holloway, and the land that marched with Squire Bennet in Widcombe. It is interesting that the former appears to have been the site of the later Somerset House, while the latter was adopted as the garden of Somerset House in Church Street, Widcombe. Dr.Sloman has remarked in conversation that 'Somerset' was the family name of the Dukes of Beaufort, influential in Bath in the early 18th century.

Alistair Durie writes:

Publication of the long awaited research on Thomas Parson's diary has delighted all I have spoken to. Not only has it linked together people formerly isolated but also placed them firmly in a local context; Widcombe history has gained much in the process.

Dr. Sloman is to be congratulated for a memorable piece of research which I hope will encourage the publication of more such research into this vibrant period in Bath's history.

Dr. Barbara J.Lowe, *Keynsham Abbey – a Cartulary*, Trafford Publishing, 2006, price £12.43
ISBN 1-4120-9534-4. Paperback, pp 150, figs. 20, Pl. 24
Available on-line at trafford.com/06-1289 or from 'Churchs' or 'Family Books' in Keynsham
Also from Dr. Lowe, 37 Manor Road, Keynsham, BS31 1RB

Cometh the hour, cometh the (wo)man. If it had not been for Barbara Lowe's energy, commitment and ability, our knowledge of Keynsham Abbey would be immeasurably the poorer. She it was who galvanised the members of the Folk House Archaeology Society, back in the 60s, to record the remains of the abbey when they were so shamefully, even in the context of the times, bulldozed away for the bypass. More to the point she also published the information. Now she has done a similar service to historians, making available all the documentary 'information that I have assembled during my forty years research into the history of Keynsham and its Abbey'.

Strictly, a cartulary is a collection of charters and, by extension, of important documents, usually of a public or quasi public nature, kept by an institution such as a cathedral or monastic chapter. A cartulary is, in effect, a bound volume (or roll) of copies of documents kept as evidence of the privileges, rights and obligations of an institution, and its official and financial transactions. All medieval ecclesiastical establishments had them, and many survive, in whole or in part. Keynsham's does not, and Ms Lowe's new book is an attempt to provide what is known of the documentary record of the abbey in a similar form.

As such it is not a 'good read' and nor is it intended as such. This is a book to be mined for information. Read bit by bit the book is full of fascinating detail and (often frustratingly incomplete) human stories, but one to dip in and out of. With this in mind, a slightly more expansive index would have been useful, but the provision of one at all (honestly called a brief index) is an achievement these days. The bibliography too is very valuable. There are some valuable and to this reader, unfamiliar, illustrations, a large number in colour. It is a pity that the captions are, for technical reasons, separate from the colour plates.

The meat of the book, a chronological treatment of all the documents relating to the abbey that have been found to date, is sandwiched between an historical introduction, which is interesting and useful on the question of the pre-abbey church in Keynsham, along with a full explanation of the life and organization of the abbey, and a brief postscript on the post-Dissolution history of the abbey site until the present.

The meat, as I have described it, is presented century by century, with each section given an introduction reminding us of what was going on locally and nationally at the time. It is not, strictly, a transcription at all. In fact it would take a lot of work, and I am not sure it would always succeed, to work out exactly which document is being presented and where we might consult the original. Some major cross referencing with the bibliography would be necessary. The core content of each document or group of documents is extracted and usually presented with some explanatory or interpretative framework. Indeed, if there is a criticism of the book, it is that the information in the documents collected is not clearly distinguished from the comment and context. There is a sort of narrative, supported by the chronological framework of the book, but it is broken by the need to deal with the documents and what they mean. Asides by the author explaining who someone is, or what a particular document was actually for, or excursions into a particular archaeological discovery that might be linked to the document under discussion flow seamlessly in and out of the actual documents. A consequence of this is that places and

people appear in a variety of spellings, which reflect that of the document of the moment. It is right to decide to use the spellings as given in a document: Sentlo for St. Loe, for example, or Westharptre for West Harptree, but to use such spellings in the modern text, so that it varies from page to page and from obvious to obscure, is not the best practice.

There is much, nonetheless to be grateful for. Barbara Lowe has given access to the documents relating to Keynsham Abbey to all but the most academically pure. Only those wanting an unadulterated basic text of each document to analyse will not be satisfied with the information made available in this volume. In addition to the text, there is a list of the abbey's property holdings at the Dissolution and what might for the general reader be the surprising (if not actually untypical) story of the civilised way the canons of the abbey were dealt with at the Dissolution. Ms Lowe also very usefully links the layout and development of the abbey buildings as known from her archaeological work into events and processes mentioned in the documents.

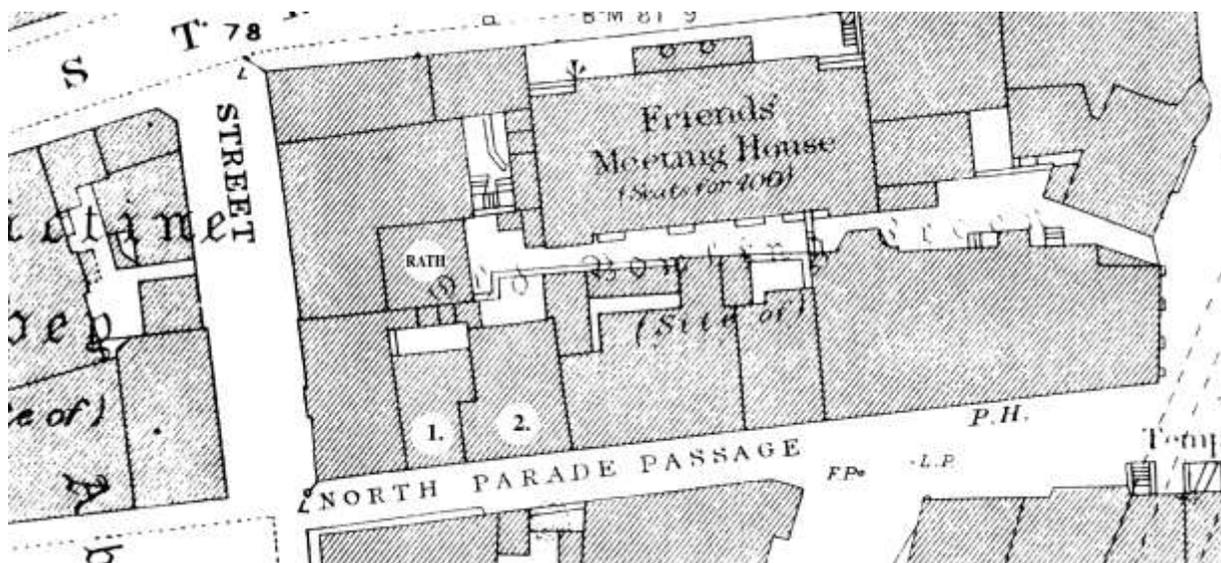
Peter Davenport

The Time Team, 'Secrets of the Stately Garden', Monday 27 August (August Bank Holiday) 2007, 9-10 pm., Channel 4.

Tony Robinson's Time Team Special dealt with the restoration of Prior Park gardens by the National Trust. The Project Archaeologist, Friends member Marek Lewcun, appeared more than once, discussing the Cascade, the Moses statue and the Grotto, and with his ready and affable address and knowledge of the subject, provided the highlights of the programme. Tony Robinson's comments on classical influences in the 18th century were well put but must be familiar to Bath dwellers. The programme also discussed 18th century Bath as a Roman city, a subject already covered by the *Survey* (No .10).

This is not the first time that members of the former Bath Archaeological Trust have appeared on national programmes, which naturally is a lift for those who are proud of their expertise and of the city. Marek's study of the Prior Park project appeared in the *Survey* No.21, p.8.

✂✂✂✂✂✂✂✂✂✂✂✂✂✂✂✂



Extract from the OS 1886 large-scale map showing Nos.1 & 2 North Parade Passage and the Ralph Allen Town House in their setting. See 'The Forerunners', below.

Ron Russell, *The Batheaston Cloth Industry, 1660-1823*, The Batheaston Society, 2007

A4, 22pp., illustrated. Obtainable from Ron Russell, price £3.50 (+ £1.00 postage), tel: 01225 859357

This study, which follows the history of clothmaking in Batheaston from the 17th to the 19th century is partly a result of the Batheaston Historic Buildings Survey undertaken between 2000-2002, an overview of which was published in *The Survey of Bath & District* No.18 November 2003. Bringing together information from the Parish Records and archaeological evidence a picture is drawn up of the industry in the village set within its local and national context.

Clothiers residences, clothworkers houses, a dye-house, a stove house and evidence of fulling mills which can still be found in the village are all included, together with a history of the families who were involved. Explanation is also provided of the various clothmaking processes and machinery, and the kind of cloth that was produced in Batheaston (for a while there was even a silk factory operating here!).

Although only a slim volume, this will provide a useful guide to anyone wishing to study the cloth industry around Bath in greater detail, being well illustrated and produced with good quality maps, diagrams and photographs.



Dyehouse Lane, Batheaston

Rain Magic

On Monday 16 July a giant image of Homer Simpson 'brandishing a doughnut' was painted next door to the well-known fertility symbol, the Cerne Abbas giant, in biodegradable paint, in order to advertise the new Simpson film. Pagans were unimpressed and the spokesperson for the Pagan Federation remarked that they would not wait for rain to arrive to wash it away (the day was fine) but would practise some Rain Magic.

On Tuesday 17 July a violent rainstorm hit Bath. Someone in the Prior Park Garden Centre remarked to Elizabeth that it must be like India. Elizabeth replied that she had lived in India and this seemed to be much worse. Other parts of England were flooded and the flooding continued for days, Tewkesbury becoming an island, Gloucestershire running out of clean water (there was plenty of the other stuff falling from the sky), parts of Oxford being flooded, and so on. The Water Authority tour bus currently urging people to save water presumably went home.

Moral: It is a waste of time to practise Rain Magic in the monsoon season.

Meanwhile Greece was ablaze, with temperatures of around 45°C., over 115°F., and later the Canary Islands caught fire. China was flooded and tragically hundreds died, and later thousands were made homeless in Bangladesh and Nepal by excessively heavy rain.

Flood Times

Dr. Sydney Chapman has sent us this extract from *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs. Delaney* (maker of ornate paper flowers), edited by Lady Llanover, published 1862. Mrs. Delaney describes how she has travelled to Bulstrode, arriving on Saturday 3 September 1768. The water on the parade at St. James's in London was like a great lake. The editor remarks:

The inundations alluded to in this letter (1768), were terrific. At Leyland, in Lancashire, on the 26th of July in that year, the thunder was incessant for four hours, and the rain swelled the Madding brook so rapidly that it carried away the bridge and four houses, in one of which were inhabitants. The inundations in South Wales were ruinous; in the counties of Glamorgan, Monmouth, and Carmarthen, torrents poured from the mountains and swept away men, women, and cattle, destroyed the crops, and laid the town of Neath under water. In the Isle of Man the lightning fell on a clergyman's house and struck his wife dead in her bed. From Inverness to Perth the country was flooded, and at Norwich the lightning fell on one of the city towers, killed a boy, and threw down part of the battlements. The Serpentine, in Hyde Park, rose so high that it forced down part of the wall, and poured with such violence upon Knightsbridge that the inhabitants expected the whole town to be overflowed. The Canal in St. James's Park rose higher than ever was known, and the water flowed up to the garden-wall belonging to the Treasury, where the lower parts of the houses were overflowed, and the sentinel near the little gate leading to Duke Street was obliged to quit his box. The offices under the Earl of Suffolk's house had water in them, and the whole of that side of St. James's Park and the Bird Cage Walk was overflowed.

Letters Page: Change of Policy

The Bath Chronicle now only appears weekly, providing less opportunity for people to express their views in a permanent fashion. What is on a website may be gone by next week, what is in the Record Office or a library remains. As a result we have decided from now on to accept letters on controversial items such as planning applications. This will make no difference to the Survey itself, which is forbidden by its constitution to take any sides in city politics, but is required simply to concentrate on research.

Letter-writers to the *Chronicle* have frequently been rebuked by other writers for their abusive style,

referring to their opponents as ‘whinging’ and so on. Our refined readers will not be writing letters of this nature.

The *Chronicle*’s valuable spreads on new books, new websites and so on will presumably also be restricted for lack of room. We shall be glad to continue to receive books for reviews, news of books, websites, exhibitions and so on.

Contributions

We welcome all contributions to the magazine though, as always, articles should be discussed in advance with the Editors. Please send material to Elizabeth on paper copies, with a disc as well if you are on computer. Anthony Brannan is currently assisting with the typesetting and the disc will be handed to him. If pressed for time, it is possible to e-mail an item directly to Anthony (agbrannan@hotmail.co.uk) but as it is Elizabeth who counts the pages for the magazine, he will have to run her off a paper copy and this will only delay the arrival of your contribution at her desk. Letters meanwhile should be sent to Leslie Holt.

Please use our House Style as used in the magazine. 18 July 2007, not 18th July or 18th July. 19th century. Rev.J.W.Smith M.A., not RevJWSMITHMA or Rev. JW Smith or any of the other variations writers can devise. However no stops for acronyms, such as AGM, BBC, etc. We now use single quotes since our contributors usually refuse to use double ones, though like D.L. Sayers, Elizabeth particularly dislikes them and agrees that double quotes inside single quotes look ridiculous. However there is no resisting progress.

Gate Lore

A correspondent from Germany who used to lecture in Bath University has noticed a set of gates near his home town, Bremen, to the same pattern as those of Widcombe Manor, Bath, and would like to know the origin of this style. Bath Preservation Trust and the Museum of Bath at Work were unable to throw any light on the Widcombe Manor gates. Is there any gate expert out there who has information on this branch of ‘garden furniture’?

Nature Notes

The residents of Prior Park Buildings have several times been edified by the sight of a heron standing on the front pavement, possibly inspecting property values, or on the other hand looking for food. At other times it is seen sitting on the roofs at the back. Elizabeth remarks that this is possibly the reason why she no longer possesses the 20 or so frogs which used to chorus musically in her back garden, especially on warm summer evenings (remember warm summer evenings?).

On a more ominous note, there are also hornets. They are supposed to be very rare nowadays, but they appear each year.



BATH UNION WORKHOUSE, THE CHAPEL, JOHN PLASS, AND ST. MARTIN'S HOSPITAL

W.H.A.Chislett

W.H.A.Chislett is Secretary of the Association of Friends of St. Martin's, formed in 1954. This essay is summarised from a 24-page booklet deposited by the author in Bath Record Office, containing extra detail on the subjects covered.

The Survey of Bath and District, No.20, 2005, included an article by Alistair Durie, pp.35-39, on 'Lyncombe and Widcombe Poor Houses'. The article discusses the early Poor Houses of the area and ends with a note on the Bath Union Workhouse. A plan of the layout of the Workhouse and a photograph of the Hospital which replaced it, appear on page 39.

A photograph of the front elevation of the Hospital appears in the Survey No.17, 2002, p.48. The caption should read 'by the Glasshouse site' not 'on'. Allan Keevil's work has shown that the Union Workhouse was built on land once belonging to the Barracks Farm estate. (References in the J.Charlton map of 1799 are not always correct.) (See also closing note of the present article, archaeology.)

Creating Bath Union Workhouse

The Board of Guardians of the Bath Union under the Chairmanship of the Reverend Thomas Spencer was constituted on 28 March 1836 on the basis of the Poor Law Act (Amendment) of 1834. The amendment updated the Act of 1601 (made permanent in 1640), whereby individual parishes were responsible for maintaining and setting to work paupers under the supervision of the Overseers of the Poor, who were often churchwardens. The amendment grouped parishes together.

The first meeting of the Board of Guardians was held on 29 March 1836 at the Walcot Workhouse. Robert Weale Esq., Assistant Poor Law Commissioner, eight Ex-Officio Guardians and the whole of the new Board of Guardians comprising forty-one persons elected from the 24 parishes that made up the Bath Union attended the meeting. The Reverend Thomas Spencer was elected Chairman and Charles Batsford Esq., Vice-Chairman. Mr. L.Harrington was elected Clerk, who for some reason was dismissed on 11 May 1836, and a Mr. Christian Brown elected Clerk. The new Board of Guardians is listed as Appendix 1 of the Record Office booklet.

The parishes included in the new Bath Union were: Bathampton, Batheaston, Bathford, Bathwick, Charlcombe, Claverton, Combe Hay, Englishcombe, Dunkerton, Hinton Charterhouse, Langridge, Lyncombe & Widcombe, Monkton Combe, St. Catherine, St. James, St. Michael, St. Peter and Paul, South Stoke, Swainswick, Twerton, Walcot, Wellow, Weston, and Woolley. (Freshford joined at a later date).

On 1 June 1836 the Guardians agreed to erect a new Workhouse. Tenders were invited on 27 July 1836 for plans and a specification to accommodate 500 paupers. A design submitted by Sampson Kempthorne (1809-1873) based on a hexagonal plan was selected. Perhaps it is of no coincidence that Kempthorne's father was a friend of the Poor Law Commissioner Thomas Franklin Lewis. However, Kempthorne had had other workhouses built to his designs.

The new Workhouse was built on a site between the Warminster Road (now Midford Road) and the Frome Road at Combe Down on 5 acres of land bought from a Mr. Gorton for £550 on 5 April 1837. Mr. David Aust to whom a contract had been placed for £6,440 built the Workhouse. The foundation stone was laid in 1837. The building, of freestone, some of which was quarried on the spot and the remainder coming from Combe Down, was completed on 16 May 1838. Mr. Joseph and Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Hagger were elected Master and Matron in 1839 and resigned as a result of Mr. Hagger's infirmity in 1856. Mr. and Mrs. George Dowling were appointed Master and Matron in July of 1859.

Over the ensuing 25 years additional land was purchased including Govey's Cottages for the building of

wards for aged and infirm men, a school, new lunatics' wards, the Chapel, the boundary wall, a bakery and the enlargement of the cookhouse. The inmates carried out most of the building work and by the 1850s the Workhouse was accommodating over a thousand paupers.

In 1868 the Board of Guardians interviewed 10 applicants for the post of Superintendent of Adult Labour. A Mr. Hutchins who had 10 years army experience was selected at a salary of £10 annum with rations and lodgings.

Life in the Union Workhouse

The Workhouse Regime

The diet for the Workhouse was divided between men and boys 12 years and older, and similarly for women and girls. Typically for dinner the entitlement would be 6oz. of bread, half an ounce of margarine or dripping, 2 oz. of cheese, 4 oz. of hot potatoes plus salt. Dr. Clara Dunbar Cross was appointed Hospital Pathologist in the late 1930s. Her book *In the Thick of It* describes the regime in the Workhouse which was still partly functioning when she and another writer, Dr. Fritz Kohn, were appointed to the Hospital. Dr. Cross's work is obtainable from the Association of Friends of St. Martin's, and from Cross Engineering at Combe Down, cost £5.

A feature of life was the Workhouse bell. Made of brass, it used to hang behind the clock in the main building. It was rung at various times of the day – for arousing inmates in the morning, at meal times, and at 6.30 pm each evening to admit tramps to the Workhouse who had been waiting for admittance for the night. The bell is now in the possession of the BANES PCT.

Lunatic Wards

In 1854 it was considered that better provision should be made for those lunatic paupers who might properly remain in the Workhouse. On 28 March 1855 a decision was made to erect a new and separate building for their accommodation in accordance with the plan of Mr.T.Fuller, architect. On 1 October 1855 Jerom Murch Esq., Chairman of the Board laid the foundation stone and the building opened on 30 January 1857. An inscription was placed in the passage at the entrance to the wards (see the booklet, page 4) giving details of the creation of the 'Bath Union Asylum' with the words, 'Help Those Who Cannot Help Themselves'.

Education

Education of the children in the Workhouse was taken seriously. Three teachers who lived on the premises were employed, one for each school. There was an infant school for children between the ages of 10 months and 7 years. The older ones were taught sewing in addition to the usual school instructions whilst the very little ones were taken out in a pony wagon. The school for girls between the ages of 7 and under 16 was taught the usual school instructions, sewing, knitting, washing, ironing, house cleaning, bed making and shoe cleaning in preparation for service. The school for boys between the ages of 7 and 16 was also taught the usual school instructions and either field labour, shoemaking, tailoring or cleaning shoes and knives. They also assisted in the bakery and were drilled and instructed in fifing and drumming and had a school band that comprised about 20 boys. Both the girls and boys school had their own library comprising about 50 volumes each. In September of 1868 HM Inspector of Schools visited the school at the Workhouse and advised that an additional schoolmaster should be appointed, the number of boys under instruction was 103, with other duties this was too much for one. The schools committee strongly recommended that immediate steps be taken to appoint an assistant schoolmaster at a salary of £30 per annum together with board and lodgings.

A Mr. Winkworth (Winckworth) was from the early 1856 to the 1870s the Boys' School schoolmaster. He kept a comprehensive diary of day to day running of the School, the Workhouse and his and its daily life. A typescript of his diary for the year 1856 together with a photocopy of the original is deposited with the Bath Record Office. (D1830)

Overcrowding

In 1866 there were complaints whereby boys had to sleep two to a bed with some of the older ones billeted with adults, which was not permissible. As a result additional sleeping quarters were built.

Wine consumption

In 1867 Mr. Green, a member of the Board of Guardians, raised the question of the great quantity of wine that was being consumed at the Workhouse, and at his request the Master prepared a statement. In 1860 132 gallons of wine and 973 gallons of porter were consumed, and in 1866 391 gallons of wine and 1293 gallons of porter. No one could have wine except it was ordered by the surgeon and entered in his book – the total number of sick in the Workhouse in 1860 was 219. With regard to the consumption of porter, there were 30 pauper nurses and workers at the Workhouse, 3 of whom had a pint and the remainder half a pint each day.

Name Change

The Bath Union Workhouse became known as the Frome Road House in 1905 and later the Frome Road House Poor Law Institution. In 1929 the Board of Guardians was disbanded and the responsibility passed to County and County Borough Councils.

Quote from the *Bath Weekly Chronicle* 20 March 1930:

The Board of Guardians having delivered their valedictory speeches last week, are meeting on Wednesday to sweep everything up before passing into oblivion for the greater part, or becoming by a kind of metamorphosis either actual or co-opted members of the Public Assistance Committee, which has now assumed the functions formerly discharged by the Board of Guardians. The father of the Board is Mr C Sealy who, ex Chairman now for many years, was first elected in 1898, 32 years ago

(The last sentence appears to mean:

The father of the Board of Guardians for many years was Mr.C.Sealy who, ex Chairman now, was first elected in 1898, 32 years ago.)

The Bath Union Workhouse Chapel

The need for a chapel at the Workhouse had been evident since the opening in 1838. Having arrived at the decision to build, it was necessary to go about the task in the most economical manner. An inmate at the Workhouse called John Plass, a man of advanced age, a mason by trade, was set to work by the Board of Guardians, the stone being dug from the Workhouse garden. The foundation stone for the Chapel was laid on 10 February 1843 by Tristram Whitter Esq., M.D. in the presence of G.W.Blathwayt Esq., Chairman of the Board of Guardians, and the children of the Workhouse sang a hymn especially written for the occasion.

The Chapel was built to a design by the architect Mr. Manners and the building work undertaken by the inmates of the Workhouse under the supervision of Mr. Hagger, the Master. Built of freestone quarried in the Workhouse garden, the Chapel was of the early English style, a plain and substantial structure with lancet windows and an open timber roof. It had the advantage over most ecclesiastical structures of the day, the internal walls being lined with freestone instead of being plastered. Its dimensions were 67' X 35', capable of accommodating up to 450 persons. In addition there was a gallery at the west end to accommodate up to 250 children. A font in the same style was placed on the north side.

The pulpit and reading desk were painted in imitation of oak. Two carved gothic chairs, the work of Mr.

J.Jones of Harrington Place, were placed one on each side of the communion table. Mr. May of Dorchester Street gave the windows at the eastern side of the Chapel, bordered with stained glass. The communion plate which was simple and chaste was a present from Mr. Yeeles Esq., Guardian for Bathford.

It is on record that John Plass placed every stone of the Chapel, both internal and external, the interstices being filled up by others who assisted in preparing the materials. The Board treated Plass liberally and no doubt the same privileges prevailed after the completion of the work.

The Chapel was opened on 28 April 1846 amidst much ceremony. John Plass the builder was fitted out in a new suit with a sprig of evergreen in his buttonhole and took his place with the dignitaries. It was believed that a finer looking old fellow was not to be found within a twenty miles circuit of Bath. His demeanour was most becoming and he had probably done what no other individual had achieved. He was observed with unusual interest and it was recorded that he seemed to feel that his earthly work was completed. At the principal western entrance of the Chapel a stone is fixed by the porch recording his services. The last two lines were added after his death.

**To record the services of
JOHN PLASS,
inmate of this Workhouse,
who at the age
of 78, working with much zeal and industry,
laid all the stones of this building.
Died 5th June 1849, aged 82,
And is buried in the adjoining ground.**

A longer tablet recording the work of officials concerned in the creation of the Chapel was placed on its north wall. It is transcribed in the Record Office booklet.

On 27 July 1847 at 3.30 pm, after the consecration of St. Matthew's Church, Widcombe (a note on this church by Doreen Collyer appears in the *Survey* No. 21, page 32) the Bishop proceeded to the Union Workhouse to consecrate a piece of land for the internment of such poor persons as might die within the house. Thus the inconvenience of removing bodies to different parishes would in future be obviated. On 6 April 1858 a second piece of land was conveyed and consecrated. This later site was opposite Oolite Road.

In 1924 the Chapel was dedicated to St. Martin of Tours. When the Workhouse became a Hospital it ceased to have a full-time Chaplain and successive incumbents of local parishes took over the duties. In 1962 the Association of Friends of St. Martin's funded its redecoration. A grade C listed building, it is no longer in use as a place of worship and was sold in 2006. Its religious regalia and artefacts are in the possession of BANES PCT.

W.H.A.Chislett has transcribed all the tablets in the Chapel and placed them in the Record Office booklet. These include Christian Brown, for 17 years Clerk to the Board of Guardians, died 1854, and Eliza Norris, Schoolmistress, niece of Joseph Hagger, died 1854 aged 25. Also the Rev. John Scott, 1865, George Dowling, 1888, probationer nurse Mabel Snellgrove, 1913 (died on Christmas Eve aged 22), Julia Emily Hennessey, 1922, and Harry Newell, 1960, who though blind was the Chapel Organist for 42 years. His wife Martha, died 1971, is commemorated on the same tablet.

There are also two boards in the Chapel containing the Ten Commandments, and in the porch a framed plan of the Chapel and a list of Bath Union Chaplains 1846-1932 (booklet p.13). The memorials also include one to Joseph Hagger, died 1859, and his wife Mary Elizabeth, died 1858, Master and Matron. The booklet adds these notes:

Mr. Hagger died in Liverpool and was buried in Toxeth Park Cemetery. His wife Mrs. Hagger died in

Bath and was buried at Combe Down. Note: The burial service was probably held at The Holy Trinity Church and internment at Monkton Combe.

The stone for the tablet was taken from the quarry in the Workhouse and the inscription cut by an aged pauper, named William Hulonce. Hulonce died in the Workhouse on 2 November 1862, aged 71 years and was buried in the new burial ground. Holonce (Hulance) was probably from Widcombe where a family of masons and stonecutters lived.

On page 14 of the booklet are notes on items to be found in the Chapel garden.

John Plass (Pleass)

Little is known of John Plass before he entered the Workhouse, however recent research has established that his name was probably Pleass and not Plass as he is referred to. There is evidence to support the view that he had been married, had lived in Bath the early part of the 19th century and may have been one of the first inmates in the new institution.

Having been set to work to build the Chapel by the Board of Guardians John Plass certainly took on the task with much energy. His endeavours did not go unnoticed and were well recorded. It was reported that he was so determined to accomplish the task himself that he would brook no assistance. When he obtained leave from the Workhouse to go out for pleasure he hastened back lest some hand should lay a stone and rob him never so little of the honourable distinction he coveted of being the sole builder of the edifice. Some sources report that he was an alcoholic others say that he was rewarded with a pint of beer a day for his efforts. John Whittingham Bush onetime Chairman of the Guardians said that Mr. Hagger the Master of the Workhouse in the time of John Plass had informed him that Plass

Was a returned convict, and that he could not keep himself sober when out of the Workhouse, but as an inmate he conducted himself with propriety, and was allowed a small quantity of porter daily, upon the recommendation of the medical officer

He died 5 June 1849 aged 82 and was buried in the adjoining ground. The John Plass Day Hospital perpetuates his name at St. Martin's.

The Surname

The name of Plass is not of English origin, it is in fact German and prominent in Southern Germany. If John Plass had been German it would have been common knowledge. A check of the 1841 census for the Workhouse in the parish of Lyncombe & Widcombe revealed no name of Plass but does record a John Pleass Mason age 70 years (not born in county) Inmate at the Workhouse (Institution Book 1).

Note: the census for 1841 allowed ages to be rounded to the nearest 5 or 10.

The Record Office booklet contains other notes, pp.16-17, on the name Plass and on Pleass/Place/Please, corruptions of each other. Another John Plass, aged 60, was buried in the Workhouse in 1852. It seems probable that he was a son of John Plass and also the individual who was convicted of stealing in January 1851.

Portrait of John Plass

A fellow pauper, William Bird, an inmate at the time of John Plass, painted his portrait in watercolours. It depicted a tall hale old man with good features wearing a leather apron and holding in his folded hands a trowel and stone chopper. The painting was inscribed:

An inmate of the Bath Union Workhouse, began the mason's work of the Chapel in 1843, and finished it in 1846 at the advanced age of 78 years

The portrait and a framed note recording its rediscovery in 1916 at the Poor Law Offices at 3 North

Parade, Bath, on their removal to 12 Charlotte Street, are in the possession of BANES PCT, St. Martin's Hospital. A photographic copy of the painting (framed by the Friends of St. Martin's) now hangs in the John Plass Day Room at the Hospital.

William Bird probably spent a short time at the Workhouse, as he is not recorded as being an inmate there on the 1841 and 1851 census returns. There was a William Bird living at Somerset Buildings, Walcot in 1851 whose occupation was miniature portrait painter, born Great Bedwin, Wiltshire, aged 51. Noting that the face of John Plass in the painting is very detailed compared with the rest of the portrait, it is more than probable that this William Bird painted the portrait.

St. Martin's Hospital

In 1937 the Workhouse became known as St. Martin's Hospital. The old buildings included medical and surgical wards, a maternity department, a ward for children and other buildings that were occupied by the chronically sick and old people who were under the jurisdiction of the local authority. At the outset of the Second World War (1939) the Ministry of Health built an Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Hospital facility in the grounds and encompassed some of the existing workhouse buildings. The purpose of the facility was to accommodate casualties from the air raids in other parts of the country. However, as a result of the evacuation of the armed forces from Dunkirk in 1940 provision had to be made at Combe Down for the returning sick and wounded.

With the introduction of the National Health Service in 1948 under the NHS Act of 1946, the EMS and the Workhouse part of St. Martin's became one unit to form an united St. Martin's Hospital. The Hospital flourished as a general hospital until about 1980 by which time many of the facilities including the accident and emergency and maternity units had been transferred to the Royal United Hospital (RUH).

The new millennium saw further developments at St. Martin's with the setting up of Bath and North East Somerset Primary Care Trust (BANES PCT) in 2001 which currently shares the Hospital with the Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership (A&W MHP). Transfer of facilities to the RUH continued and surplus land was sold off including the Chapel and cricket pitch for housing development. However despite the reduction in the facilities provided by the Hospital it will continue to provide a valuable service to the community by means of therapies and outpatient departments, a resource centre for older people including those with mental illness, and a rehabilitation unit providing 35 beds for older people. In 2005 Mr. David McEwen the Chairman of the Association of the Friends of St. Martin's Hospital opened the New Sulis rehabilitation unit for older people.

The Hospital is at present served by two Hospital Chaplains, Reverend Margaret Joyce from St. Philip and St. James, Odd Down and Father Bill McLaughlin from St. Peter and Paul, Combe Down.

A chronology recording major events in the development of the Workhouse, Chapel, Hospital and the Association of Friends of St. Martin's is at Appendix 1, below.

Appendix 1

Bath Union Workhouse – Chapel – St.Martin's Hospital Chronology of Major Events

- | | |
|------|---|
| 1834 | The Poor Law Amendment Act introduced |
| 1836 | Board of Guardians formed and comprised 41 members under the chairmanship of the Rev.Thomas Spencer representing 24 parishes
27 July tenders were invited for plans and specification to accommodate 500 souls Sampson Kempthorne awarded contract |
| 1837 | 5 acres of land purchased from Mr. Gorton for £550 at Combe Down between the Frome Road and Warminster Road (Now known as Midford Road)
Contract placed with Mr.David Aust for the building of the Workhouse at a cost of £6,440 |
| 1838 | 6 May Workhouse completed |

The Survey of Bath and District No.22, October 2007

- 1843 10 February the Foundation stone for the Chapel was laid by Dr.Whitter and John Plass set to work by the Board of Guardians
- 1845 Additional 5 acres purchased for the building of invalid and additional sick wards
- 1846 28 April Chapel opened, John Plass took his place with the guests
- 1847 27 July piece of land consecrated for the internment of those who died within the house
- 1849 5 June John Plass died aged 82
- 1855 Additional 11 acres purchased for the building of new lunatic wards and the boundary wall enlargement of the cookhouse and an upper story for the infants school
- 1858 New dining room added
A second piece of land conveyed and consecrated
- 1865 Additional 3 acres purchased along with Govey's cottages and a bakery built and produced 3,000 4lb loaves a week
With the additional building work by 1865 the Workhouse was able to accommodate over a 1000 souls and in March of that year housed some 754 paupers
- 1897 John Plass painting found in the Poor Law Union Offices
- 1905 Workhouse became known as The Frome Road House and later The Frome Road House Poor Law Institution
- 1916 John Plass painting found in the Poor Law Offices and placed in the Chapel on 13 March
- 1924 Chapel dedicated to St.Martin of Tours
- 1929 Board of Guardians disbanded
- 1937 Hospital named St.Martin's
- 1939 Hospital designated an Emergency Medical Service Hospital
- 1939 Dr.Clara Dunbar Cross was appointed Hospital Pathologist
- 1942 Dr.Fritz Kohn appointed Medical Superintendent of the Hospital 1 January
- 1944 Queen Mary visited the Hospital 9 July
- 1948 Introduction of the NHS
- 1954 The Association of the Friends of St.Martin's founded
- 1957 Dr.Kohn retired
- 1959 Kohn Hall funded by the Friends of St.Martin's opened
- 1960 Eddy Cochran a popular singer of the day died at St.Martin's Sunday 17 April
- 1962 The Chapel redecorated - Funded by the Friends of St.Martin's
- 1965 Dr Clara Dunbar Cross retired
- 1974 The reorganisation of the NHS
- 1975 The Dr.Clara Dunbar Cross Unit opened 28 November
- 1977 John Plass Day Unit Hospital opened
- 1979 The rationalisation of the NHS within the Bath Health District
- 1980 "Bee" Beatrice Beadle died (30 years a patient at St. Martin's)
- 1985 Dr.Frederic (Fritz) Kohn died
- 1986 Dr.Clara Dunbar Cross died
- 1991 NHS Trusts set up
- 1992 The Friends of St.Martin's registered as a Charity with the Charity Commission
- 2000 The commencement of the transfer of some facilities to RUH
- 2001 BANES Primary Care Trust (PCT) set up
- 2005 Kohn Hall demolished
The new Sulis Unit opened by Mr.David McEwen Chairman of the Friends of St.Martin's
- 2006 Chapel put up for sale and sold

Acknowledgements/References

I wish to thank Bath Record Office and the Bath Central Library for their assistance in this study.

Also Elizabeth Black, Estates and Facilities Manager BANES PCT, Brian G. Wetten AHA, at one time Hospital Secretary, and Peter Higginbotham for the use of his website.

Documents and References

Bath Chronicle and *Bath Weekly Chronicle*, various dates

Census returns for 1841, 1851, 1881

Friends of St. Martin's Records

Metcalf, Sheila, transcr., *Winkworth Diary*, 1856

Southern, Dave and Noad, Heather, transcr., *Bath Union Workhouse Burials Register*, Vol.2.

Bibliography

Bath County Graphic, 1897, p.47

Bath Street Directories

Bush, John Whittington, *Bath Union Notes*, 1865

Cross, Dr. Clara Dunbar, *In the Thick of It*, 1989

Kohn, Dr. Frederic (Fitz), *It Crossed my Mind – n.p.d.*

Kedge, R.C., *St Luke's Church – the First Hundred Years – n.p.d.*

Peach, R.E.M., *Street Lore of Bath*, 1893

Stone, Barbara G., *Bath Millennium*, 1970s

Note: the *Survey* No. 21, 2006, p.6, carried a short report by Peter Davenport on Oxford Archaeology's excavations on the St. Martin's/Workhouse site.



The site of the overflow Burial Ground, Bath Union Workhouse.

Photograph: Alistair Durie 2007



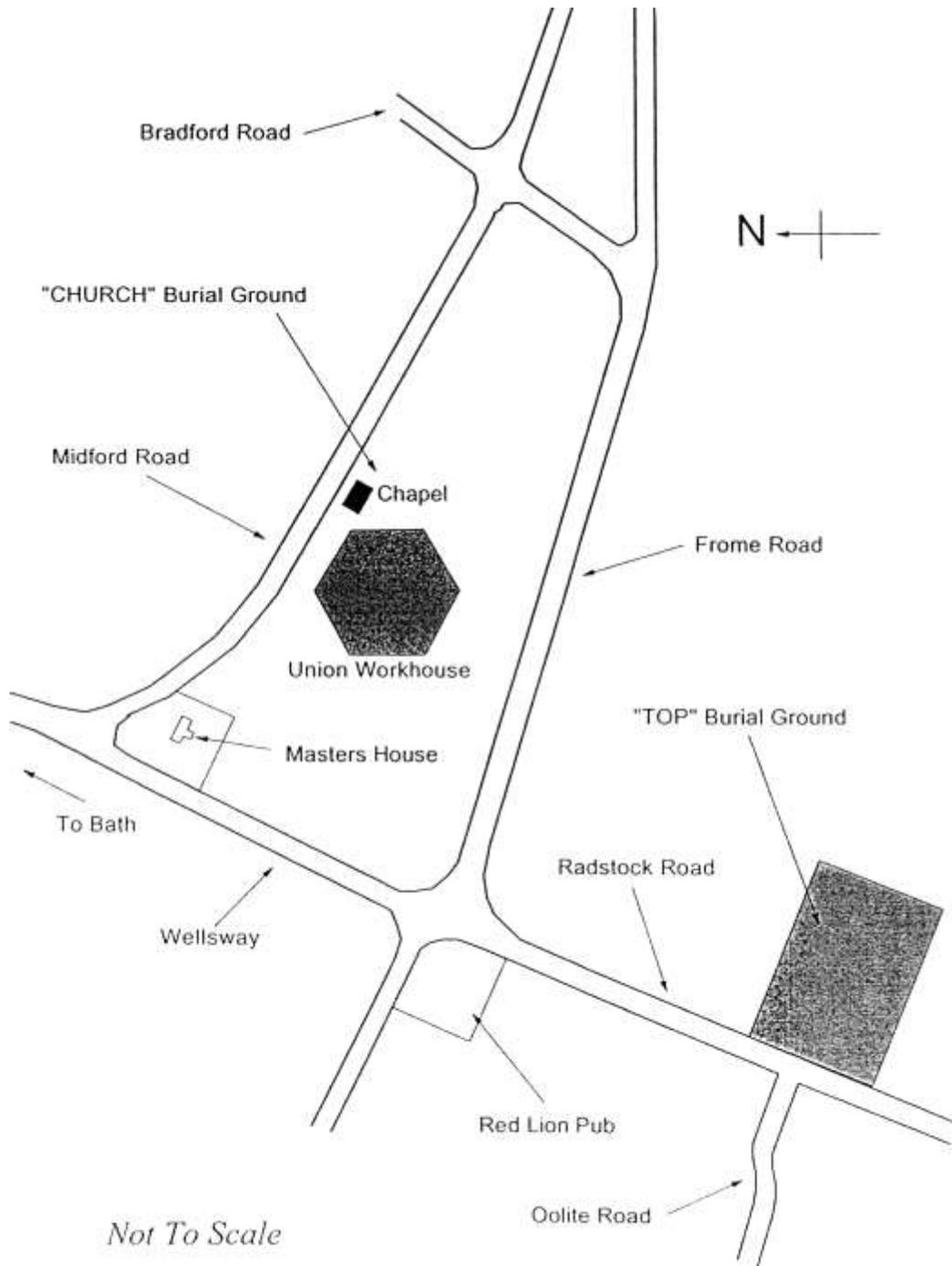
Site of the Burial Ground by Bath Union Workhouse Chapel.

Photograph: Alistair Durie 2007



The gateway to the overflow Burial Ground for the Bath Union Workhouse, 1858-1899. This would have been the main entrance from Wellsway, opposite the present Oolite Road, leading straight into the central path. The gateposts are marked by their square tops. On sunny evenings, the outlines of the graves can still be seen.

Photograph: Alistair Durie 2007



WORKHOUSE BURIAL GROUND LOCATIONS

The location of the two Burial Grounds, from Dave Southern and Heather Noad, transcript of the Bath Union Workhouse Burials Register 1847-99(1995).



BIG AND LITTLE THUMPER REVEALED

In the *Survey* 21, pp.26-27, we expressed doubt that the portrait in the Guildhall now labelled William Chapman, presented to the Corporation in 1728, could really be William the Distiller, the relevant Alderman, since it looked nothing like the portrait of the Distiller the Holland family possesses (now in store).

Ludwig Becker of Germany has now sent us old photographs of the portraits of William the Distiller and his son William, known to the Holland family as 'Old' or Big Thumper and Little Thumper. On the left above, Big Thumper, Mayor 1727-1728. We maintain that this cannot be the same person as the Guildhall portrait. We believe that that picture, reproduced on p.26 of the *Survey* 21, is Alderman Walter Chapman, saddler, who owned the Star and Garter north of the Abbey – Mayor 1726-1727.

Our advisors do not agree that this portrait above left shows the Alderman on p.27 of the *Survey* 21 unless the latter picture is a bad portrait.

Above right, his son Little Thumper, Mr. William Chapman of Widcombe and Lyncombe, owner of Lyncombe Farm, now called Lyncombe Hall, and also in his day Alderman and Mayor. Lilian (Chapman) Browne suggested the paintings were by Hudson and Truellen. What do art experts think? When she left Westport House in Co. Sligo and moved to a flat, the portraits went to Elizabeth's father and became part of Holland family lore.

Ludwig also forwarded other photographs, a selection of which follows. As already indicated, we would welcome pictures from other Bath families.

The Survey of Bath and District No.22, October 2007
BECKER FAMILY PICTURES

Two photographs of a charming family home of the Beckers, forwarded by Ludwig Becker.



No. 1: on the right hangs the portrait of Elizabeth Harvey reproduced on p.29 of the *Survey* 18. Ludwig suggests that it was painted by Jakob Eichholtz. Lilian Browne had a watercolour copy made when she moved to Westport House; she left it to Elizabeth who gave it to her brother Charles – it is now in Kent.

Ludwig writes: ‘On the left of the fauteuil on the floor there is an old leather coffer with brazen pegs and handles. It was used for travelling. An oval copper panel displays the letters ‘Mr. CHAls CHAPMAN no.7’. Inside it is made out of exotic wood which smells strongly. Stories say that it belonged to the ‘Bengal-Chapman.’ He suggests that his grandmother Sarah (Chapman) Becker brought it to Germany as a dowry. Probably the chest had belonged to Col.Charles Chapman, Sarah’s great-grandfather and travelled with him to India. Such a chest would be lined with cedarwood to repel insects.

2. In the opposite corner of the room hangs the portrait of Captain Thomas Chapman, reproduced on the cover of *Survey* 6, second son of Col. Charles Chapman and father of Elizabeth Harvey. Thomas, as our readers may remember, married a Quaker settler after the American War of Independence in which he had fought “with gallant and desperate valour”. When his widow returned to America, Elizabeth could not bear to desert her mother and joined her and the younger daughters on the ship. Elizabeth married the Quaker Samuel Harvey.



By Thomas Chapman hang pictures of his wife Mary Lowndes and his son Captain John James Chapman, also already reproduced in the *Survey*. Ludwig writes that the picture of John James was painted by his nephew Thomas Harvey in 1834 when J.J. visited America. Again Lilian Browne left Elizabeth her own copy of this painting. To the right is Ludwig’s wife Irmtraud Dagmar Becker, née Erdmann, aged 21.



Left: Marianne Chapman, sister of Captain John James. She later married Sir George Smith Gibbes. A picture of Lady Gibbes was published in the *Survey* No. 6. In the *Survey* No.21 a letter of Sir George Smith Gibbes was published, edited by Dr. Roger Rolls with biographical notes from the *Dictionary of National Biography*.



Above: The silhouette of Thomas Chapman's wife, Mary Lowndes, shown hanging next to his portrait.



Two miniatures which appear from the costumes to represent Mary Lowndes' parents. Compare her profile with James Lowndes, left. (He also called himself James Lownes, so it seems).



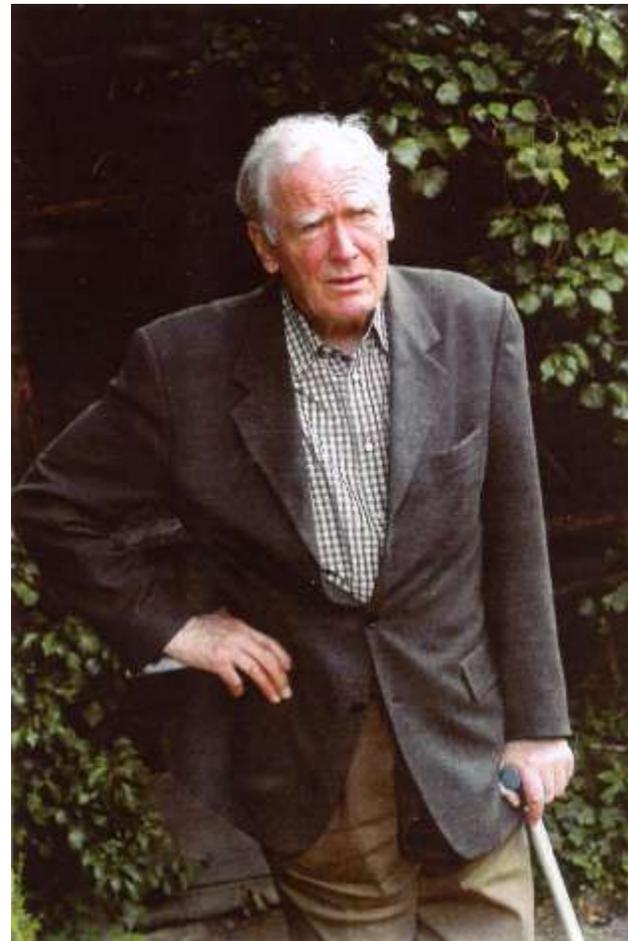
Sarah Ash Chapman (1861-1944), youngest daughter of Capt. John James Chapman.



Ludwig's parents Christoph L.B.Becker (1894-1964) and his wife Elisabeth M.Becker, née Bourquin (1895-1967).



Sarah in old age with husband Conrad Ludwig Becker (1849-1930).



Ludwig John Leonhard Becker.

Ludwig's travel diary was published in the *Survey* 8. When the family visited Bath, Ludwig presented the city with Captain John James Chapman's own personal volume of calotypes, now in the Record Office, Bath. A particular study of them was made by David McLaughlin.

Ludwig's family have close connections with the Moravian Church.



Above: (left) the north and (right) south elevations of No.2 North Parade Passage.

Published by courtesy of Messrs.Pritchard, Estate Agents.

Left: the way to the Ralph Allen Town House, 1991.

Photograph: Elizabeth Holland.

THE FORERUNNERS

The Old Post House, Ralph Allen's Town House, and Marshall Wade's House

Elizabeth Holland

Based on a study carried on with Peter Bailey and Mike Chapman. It is hoped that a list of the supporting material for this article will eventually be placed in Accession 350, Bath Record Office, and also that perhaps a CD may be made available, with extra plans and illustrations.

The Comments of Richard Jones

In the life of Richard Jones (see *Records of Bath History*, Vol.1), Jones, who was Clerk of Works to Ralph Allen and instrumental in completing Prior Park mansion, remarks about Ralph Allen's acquisition of stone-mining rights in Combe Down:

'the first heap of work was two houses in the Abbey Green near Blind Gate; the next house was Mr. Harford's in the Church Yard'.

Marshal Wade's House

Mr. Harford's house in the Church Yard is now known as Marshal Wade's house. It is hoped to deal with it at greater length elsewhere, rather than in this present essay. Neither we nor others have yet found any connection between it and Marshal Wade (or for that matter, any recorded payment from Marshal Wade for clearing out the alley known as Wade's Passage).

No. 15 Cheap Street and No. 14 the Churchyard, two back to back sites currently house the National Trust gift shop. In the 1840s No. 14 begins to be listed as the property of the Rector of Bath Abbey. Previously both properties were administered by the Corporation, who had taken control of the Churchyard. A complete list of the surviving Corporation leases for both properties is to be found in the Marta Inskip archive, Bath Record Office, created by Mrs. Inskip for the Survey of Old Bath 1980-1988. Parallel information was collected by myself and is in the Survey's files.

Trevor Fawcett's study of 18th century tradesmen confirms that the two properties were retail outlets for tailors and woollen drapers. There is no mention of Marshal Wade. All that has been needed is a building date for the ornate house facing the Churchyard, which Richard Jones supplies.

The only connection with 'Wade' seems to be that a Nicholas Wade rented the Crown as sub-tenant from Edward Marchant, situated in Stall Street and extending into the Churchyard, so that this has been transmuted into a prestigious figure owning a prestigious house in the square. A survey of 1730 states that the Cranfields' house is now the Harfords' and combined with Richard Jones's comments, this suggests that 'Marshal Wade's house' was created in 1730. An architect for that date needs to be sought, rather than 1720 as has been popular.

Bath and the Growth of Legend

All localities generate legend, iconic sites even more than most. Modern students of Bath have hoped to dispel legend and create a factual history, but new legends are created all the time. 'The very stones speak to me,' as one enthusiastic local historian remarked.

One of these new legends concerns this study – the idea that the Abbey Green was deliberately raised a storey, probably about 1750. No positive evidence from contemporary documents has been brought forward to support this. Negative evidence can easily be submitted. For one thing, the ground floor levels of Ralph Allen's Town House and the Old Post House (No.s 1 and 2 North Parade Passage) are the same

now as they were at their creation c.1727-1730. What is basement now was basement then; there is no exterior ornament to suggest these basements were ever ground floors. North Parade Passage must have been at its present level, a step or two below the floors of Nos. 1 and 2. North Parade Passage must then have led straight into the Abbey Green, and not dipped into a hole in the ground a storey lower.

Street levels rise spontaneously over the years and are indeed sometimes deliberately raised. What has actually happened is that the way past Elton House has been raised to meet York Street, created about 1810, which would have been built level and not sloping. An extra flight of steps, with an entrance between bow windows, has been added to Elton House, already visible in an illustration attributed to c.1785. Access to the basement of Elton House must have been much more open before these changes, justifying extra ornament at some stage.

The Creation of North Parade Passage

It appears that in speaking of two houses by the Abbey Green, Richard Jones, an employee of Ralph Allen's, meant to refer to Allen's own property, even though at the time he was writing the Old Post House opened into North Parade Passage and not into the Abbey Green as stated on its building lease. No other reference to the Blind Gate is known, but it may have been the gate into Ralph Allen's land at the back.

North Parade Passage has had different names in the past, such as the Way to the Lower Abbey Orchard, Abbey Green Street, Lilliput Alley, and so on. This study will use the term 'North Parade Passage' throughout.

It seems to be accepted by serious students of Bath that Sally Lunn's is not the oldest house in Bath nor even the oldest house in its own street. At the time of the Bishop's Palace dig, Mrs. Elizabeth Lucas made a number of transcripts of papers connected with the monastic premises, as background to the excavation led by Peter Davenport. On the basis of these, the Survey pointed out that Sally Lunn's was built by a lease of 1622, with five years to build, a lease granted by the first John Hall to George Parker, carpenter (Egerton Charters 5845, 15 June 20 James 1, National Archives), in the same year as other leases in the row.

The whole of the north side of North Parade Passage represents a piece of Jacobean town planning by the then owner, John Hall of Bradford-on-Avon. At any rate before the bombing, Abbey Church House was the oldest domestic building in Bath, but the northern side of North Parade Passage must represent the oldest surviving row of houses within the old walled city, changed though some of them have been. The entire terrace is of particular interest in itself and would justify a signboard commemorating its creation in the 1620s at the instigation of a Stuart entrepreneur.

Sally Lunn's would be included in this general interest. The fact that Sally Lunn was probably a bun and not a person ('Sol et Luna') has already been discussed elsewhere. 'Sally Lunn's' are mentioned far away from Bath, even in the USA. Sally Lunn's and its eastern neighbour are the least changed in a row of Jacobean houses which have the right to be studied for what they are.

Of these houses, the building which came to be known as the Old Post House, Nos 1 and 2 North Parade Passage, *was begun before Sally Lunn's*. Egerton Charters 5835, transcribed by Mrs. Lucas: John Hall to Thomas Cotterell, 11 January 1620, a building lease for a plot of ground, the site of the Old Post House and the property to the west of it which became No. 30 on the Kingston rental.

The Old Post House and its ground comprised No. 7 on the Kingston rental. The grounds are larger than the 1620 lease would suggest. The Ralph Allen Town House seems to be on some old foundation, and extra land seems to have been acquired through taking over the whole extent of this building.

The Post House

The first known reference to a post office at the site occurs in Egerton Mss. 3565, in the papers of the Countess of Kingston. The document states that it represents a survey of the manor made before the death of John Hall. Against the entry for Matravers, a Norton St. Philip family already holding the site by 1697 who presumably owned it as an investment, the name Post House is written. This John Hall died in 1711 and the use of the name may be retrospective.

Bath Postal Museum has a list of Bath postmasters. The story is told that one Mary Collins ran the post office, not very honestly, in the disused St. Michael's Church in St. Michael's Lane, later the site of the Little Theatre. Ralph Allen came to Bath as a clerk and proved himself so trustworthy that he was created postmaster himself. Through the influence of General Wade, he obtained the contract for the national cross-posts, through which he made his fortune.

His dates as postmaster are given as 1712-1748. As at one stage he definitely lived in the property, No. 7 on the Kingston rental, it seems logical to believe that he established the post office there from 1712. There is no plaque commemorating Allen's residence there nor its use as a post office. One would seem appropriate.

An abstract of a lease of 1718 granted by the Countess of Kingston to Dr. Richard Bettenson (Egerton Mss. 3565) calls the site the post house, still described as being in the Abbey Green, in possession of Ralph Allen as tenant to Dr. Bettenson. In the Kingston rental of 1726, M4348, Nottingham University, No. 7 on the rental is called the Old Posthouse, belonging to Dr. Bettenson. In M4513, 1727, Mr. Allen is pencilled in. In M4517, 1728, the entry reads Mr. Allen, the Old Post house, late Dr. Bettenson's executors. The lease now seems to have been assigned to Ralph Allen for the remainder of its term; a new and direct lease seems never to have been taken out. In 1731 he assigned the total property indicated by No. 7 on the rental, to his brother Philip as a marriage portion (SRO DD/BR WW2 C/2/2185). Allen states that he lives there and intends to rent it from Philip. Later Philip mentioned the property in his will of 1765.

In contrast to Philip Bennet, who is called 'of Lyncombe and Widcombe', Ralph Allen here still describes himself as 'of Bath'. When Ralph Allen actually went to reside in Widcombe is not certain. The late John Hawkes suggested that the 'house on the fan', attributed by legend to Allen's first Widcombe residence, represented a house built by the Poole family before Allen bought their land in the hunting park. I have always had reservations about this picture. As a domicile, between Allen's railway on one side and a building site (the west wing of Prior Park mansion) on the other, it would have been uncomfortable. I suggested originally that the picture had nothing to do with Ralph Allen, except the railway, but showed the Bennet mill in Prior Park Road, ornately decorated by Philip Bennet, a kind of signboard, 'Welcome to Bennet-land'.

The Ralph Allen correspondence needs to be re-assessed to see what his letters headed 'Widcombe' really signify. He could after all have been staying with the Bennets (Philip Allen married Philip Bennet's sister). The Survey is not planning to do this: perhaps someone interested in 18th century society would undertake it.

The Work of John Wood

In his *Essay*, John Wood the Elder makes the following references to work for Ralph Allen:

This Building was preceded by an Addition to the North Part of Mr. Allen's House in the Alley then leading from the Abbey Green to the old Bowling Green, but now to the Grand Parade, and for that, and some other Reasons, called *Lilliput Alley*: The Designs, as well as a Model for this Addition, were made while I was in *London* in the Spring of the Year 1727; and a third Part of the Bowling Green having been granted for a Garden to the House, Smock Racing and Pig Racing, playing at Foot-Ball and running with the Feet in Bags in that Green, four of the *Bath Diversions*

of those Days, thereby received their Final End: Nor did Grining, Stareing, Scolding, Eating hot Furnety, Laughing, Whistling and Jiging upon the Stage for Rings, Shirts, Smocks, Hats, etc. escape the common Ruin; these Amusements falling likewise...

While Mr. *Allen* was making the Addition to the North Part of his House in *Lilliput Alley*, he new fronted and raised the old Building a full Story higher; it consists of a Basement Story sustaining a double Story under the Crowning; and this is surmounted by an Attick, which created a sixth Rate House, and a Sample for the greatest Magnificence that was ever proposed by me for our City Houses...

Scattered references in the *Essay* make it plain what Wood's definitions mean. Rating, like magnificence (sometimes replaced by 'magnitude') refers to size. Decoration is called ornament or 'dress'. A cottage is a First Rate house, a storey and a half. Two stories make a Second Rate house. A Third Rate house has two and a half stories. With Fourth and Fifth Rate houses Wood seems to have come unstuck, as if he were trying to gather existing houses into his definitions rather than that he actually built by them. Sixth Rate houses are clear again: they have a ground floor, which he calls a basement, a principal storey, a storey above, and a habitable attic.

It is true that when speaking of accommodation for pigeons, he refers to attics in which people could not have lived. However the other house which he describes as 'a sample for the greatest magnificence' is at the corner of Queen Square and Princes Street. Its northern front, facing the square, has the regulation three stories and an attic, with kitchens below. It is not a particularly decorative house. The same format can be seen in many other places; Wood signifies that this is the ideal elevation for a grand town house.

The Ralph Allen Town House is a Fifth Rate house. It has three stories, with a pediment above, flanked by a steeply sloping gabled roof. Access to the roof space is through a small trapdoor, not by a staircase. The decorative frontage does not matter: 'magnificence' means habitable size.

The inference is that John Wood did not design the Ralph Allen Town House. John Hawkes used to say that he could not possibly have done so. On the other hand, his remarks can be shown to apply exactly to the Old Post House. Peter Bailey, the owner of No. 2 North Parade Passage (with a 'flying freehold' over No. 1 North Parade Passage), has assembled precise details to illustrate this.

On the north side of No. 2 North Parade Passage, extending farther north than the previous house as shown on old estate plans (i.e. an 'addition' to the previous house) are three large Georgian rooms, one above the other. These three rooms overtopped the remaining Stuart rooms and so an extra storey was added to the latter, with an attic above. The attic floor spans the Georgian and Stuart sides of No. 2. On the southern side, facing North Parade Passage, a new frontage was created, with, as *Pevsner* points out, five bays, and presumably a central door.

Kitchens exist below. From the north, No. 2 North Parade Passage presents the elevation that John Wood called a Sixth Rate house, whereas the Ralph Allen Town House does not. One must presume therefore that the elevation shown in the illustration here, is what John Wood was referring to. The Ralph Allen Town House he apparently passed by in dignified silence. (The house now known as Marshal Wade's house and its neighbours, he suggested, would be better knocked down.)

The ground plans in the Kingston Estate maps (apparently out of date in that of 1750), show stair turrets behind the Jacobean row of houses. That of the Old Post House would have had to be demolished to allow for the new Georgian addition. Where the staircase stood after the conversion still needs to be discussed. The present staircase of No. 2, with its basement flight, would have blocked a central door. The present staircase of No. 1 could have utilised landings once leading onto the old stair turret, but Peter Bailey reports difficulties in postulating connections between it and the new landings in No. 2. The whole needs to be re-assessed on the basis of examination on site.

If this argument about No. 2 North Parade Passage is accepted, then obviously H.V.Lansdown's picture of the Ralph Allen Town House, presumably created in the 1850s, is a fantasy. We implied this in our publication on the Kingston territory in 1992 (*The Kingston Estate within the Walled City of Bath*), since the Kingston Estate maps show that Ralph Allen did not own the land on which Lansdown's imaginary northern wing to the RATH stands. Ralph Allen's garden obtained from Humphrey Thayer, (SRO DD/BR/WW1) was not north of the RATH, but north-east of it. The site of the supposed northern wing was granted to Jelly and Fisher for redevelopment in 1762 (M4184, Nottingham University), even before Ralph Allen's death.

The legend concerning John Wood's design for the Ralph Allen Town House was so strong that we marked it as that in the 1992 publication. The arrow will have to be moved, to point to No. 2 North Parade Passage instead, and the text in the booklet rewritten.

The Ralph Allen Town House

Just as the imaginary northern wing never existed, neither did the substantial link which Lansdown shows between the Ralph Allen Town House and the Old Post House. There are signs of an ephemeral link at one stage, discussed later in this essay.

Once redesigned, the Old Post House had 15 rooms excluding the basements. They were small, but this was still acceptable in the earlier 18th century. The Ralph Allen Town House had three rooms only. Even if it ever had a linking passage at kitchen level, this would not be suitable for the gentry. One has to accept it was not built to be lived in. Commentators have probably been correct who have suggested that its three rooms were used as offices for organising the national cross-posts. One could suggest a caretaker on the ground floor, the main office with the head clerk and Ralph Allen's desk on the first floor, and the ordinary clerks above.

The Ralph Allen Town House was an advertisement for Combe Down stone, visible from all around, against a background of ancient buildings – a tradesman's card in the round. It was a pastiche, a fake nobleman's town house, just as Prior Park mansion was a pastiche of the country seat of an ancient family, with Sham Castle completing the trio.

The massive walls and irregular basement plan of the Ralph Allen Town House suggest some earlier building on the site (though Speed does not show one there). Mike Chapman believes the basement fireplace, though Tudor, is post-Dissolution. In any case No. 7 on the Kingston rental stood on monastic ground. Ralph Allen placed his mark on the monastic premises just as he did on the old hunting park to the south, around which he gathered up as much as possible of the old manor lands south of the river.

Ralph Allen took care by his pleasant and modest manners not to alienate people of birth or talent. He was genuinely charitable, though contrary to the recent Time Team programme, it was not within his scope to 'open up a new mineral spring' for the poor in Bath – there were three thermal springs and that was that. At heart he was no different from John Plass of the Bath Union Workhouse. Each, as opportunity afforded, was out to make his mark.

The Search for Designers: Discussion

The search for a designer for the house called Marshal Wade's has usually centred on the need to find an architect available around 1720, when legend supposed Marshal Wade had it built – a designer who was familiar with new trends in architecture which prevailed in London but had not usually reached the provinces by that date. However it appears that the Harfords acquired the house from the Cranfields only about 1730, when an agreement passed between Richard Harford (the Elder, judging by the signature) and Mary Cranfield regarding a mortgage (SRO DD/BR/hck 6).

A designer working around 1730 would need to be sought. The Survey does not specialise in architectural judgements, which are a subject for architectural historians. For the other properties mentioned by

Richard Jones, John Wood's own comments suggests that he designed the north elevation of No. 2 North Parade Passage and not the Ralph Allen Town House, so an architect also needs to be discovered for it. Lord Burlington, who is reputed to have been adept at designing nonfunctional houses, seems a possibility.

Which came first also needs to be decided. The new rooms added to No. 2 North Parade Passage, and the Ralph Allen Town House correspond to each other in heights and ornamental features, the latter of course having much additional ornament. It seems unlikely that John Wood consented to revamp another architect's work. He states that his designs, and a model for them, were made in London in 1727, which would seem to be too early for the Town House actually to have been completed in Combe Down stone, though designs for it could have been drawn.

1727 seems to be the year when the lease had been assigned to Ralph Allen, so that he could now embark on redevelopment. It is possible he himself sketched out plans for the two houses, as if forming two sides of a cathedral close south of the Abbey, which at that time had open gardens between it and Ralph Allen's property. (It was also in 1727 that Ralph Allen acquired from Humphrey Thayer the garden which had been part of the Bowling Green (SRO DD/BR/WW1).)

It is possible that John Wood saw such sketches and declared that they were too ornate, he would demonstrate something simpler on No. 2 North Parade Passage. Ralph Allen, one would suggest, did not like the result, John Wood passed on to Queen Square, and Ralph Allen found someone else for the Town House. Who this was, is the question which has to be solved.

Occupation by Prince Hoare

As said, the Old Post House, once refurbished, had 15 rooms, compared with the 3 rooms of the Town House. As indicated, we presume that Ralph Allen lived in the Old Post House and used the Ralph Allen Town House for the national cross-posts.

A Water Rate Book for 1747/8, by 'Mr. Allens' has the note 'Shut up'. It was in 1748 that Ralph Allen's brother Philip became postmaster. Peach suggests that Philip ran the post office from a house at the west end of the North Parade. The date at which he appears to think the post office first removed there is actually earlier than the creation of either the North Parade or North Parade Buildings.

In *Bath History* I, 1986 in an article entitled 'The Hoares of Bath', Evelyn Newby points out that the sculptor Prince Hoare lived in the Old Post House (which he calls No. 2 North Parade Passage, but the houses were still rated as one). He would imply that Hoare was already there by 1754, which could suggest that he was the next occupant of the house after 1748. He then states that Hoare moved to the Abbey Green in 1766, but this does not appear to be so.

Anthony Brannan has assembled material on the Rate Books. Abbey Green and 'Abbey Green Street' are lumped together. In the first book, 1766, the owner is given as Mr. Allen and the occupant as Prince Hoare. In the next available book, No. 4, it is true the owner is given as Mr. Jo. Smith and Smith continues until 1769, while the rate has been lowered, but the sequence is still the same as in 1766. In No.8, the second book for 1769, the year of Prince Hoare's death, the owner is Smith, the occupant is Mrs.Hoare, and there is a note, 'Last Qr. Void'. In Book No. 10, exactly where one would have expected the Hoares in the sequence, is written 'Mr. Allens Void'. This would refer to Philip Allen, the owner since the marriage settlement. He in fact mentions the property which he held from the Kingstons in his will of 1765.

The Old Post House has therefore had not one but two famous residents, and a plaque commemorating Prince Hoare would also be appropriate. Prince Hoare was the brother of William Hoare the painter discussed by Dr.Susan Sloman in her work *Gainsborough in Bath*. Dr.Sloman does not believe he kept his workshop there; sculptors' yards were usually by the river. In any case the light in the ground floor of the Town House would not be good enough. The development lease of 1762 refers to Ralph Allen's garden as Prince Hoare's garden or yard; possibly he used it for display of smaller pieces.

The Kingston papers show that Prince Hoare was paid for carving the Kingston arms on the house which became Gainsborough's, a set of carved stones which Dr.Sloman rediscovered in the stone store of the Roman Baths. Although the statue of Beau Nash in the Pump Room has been attributed to him, it is now thought it was executed in his workshop by Plura. Hoare is reputed to have been sociable and fond of a lavish lifestyle.

In our 1992 publication, we mention that No. 2 North Parade Passage has marks suggesting a connecting wall between it and the Town House. As far as one can remember it was David McLaughlin who pointed this out. We examined and photographed these marks but reported that we did not feel able to comment on the nature of the wall. Recently Peter Bailey raised this question again, having discovered lumps of mortar at roof level. An interesting article in *The Bath Magazine* by Kirsten Elliott examined the possibilities. Mike Chapman visited the site with Peter Bailey. He stated that the linking wall must have been ephemeral, though stones embedded at regular intervals in the back of No. 1 North Parade Passage are possibly remains of the old stair turret shown on estate maps.

It seems possible that Prince Hoare erected a curtain wall to hide Church Street. If it was of stone and decorated, the carving could have been done in his own workshop. One supposes that at the same time he would erect trellises from the Town House to his garden, adorned with creeper and roses. However whatever he did, the site had been spoilt.

Later History of the Site

The Ralph Allen Town House now began to go downhill, due to at least three factors. Firstly, as indicated, the creation of Church Street ruined the setting. Secondly, as again indicated, the Town House, with its three rooms, small by later standards, is not a viable gentleman's residence. Bevan Jones's survey of 1974 (Bath Record Office Accession 0273) shows that the exterior width at the front is c.20 feet, and he gives the interior width as 15 feet 4 inches. Other plans suggest that the interior length east to west is about 17 feet. The staircase at the north-west corner has to be deducted from these dimensions. In a plan of the 1960s the ground floor had a passage leading from the front door (now removed) to this staircase. Thirdly, Bath itself tended to decline in the 19th and early 20th centuries. New villas were built in the suburbs, but the older houses tended to decay.

The Rate Books were issued twice a year. By No. 12, 1771, two entries appear in the relevant position instead of one. Whether one is for the Town House and one for the Old Post House, or whether they are for some other division of the property, is not yet known. There is scope for someone to make a more detailed study of the later history of these houses.

One of the entries, interestingly enough, is for William Maxwell, given by Bath Postal Museum as postmaster from 1771-1781. He possessed other property; whether he had decided to restore the post office to his share of the site would need to be debated. A complete list of early Bath post offices does not exist. By the end of the century it was situated in Weymouth House and old plans show its entrance on the northern side.

It is not known when the Old Post House was divided structurally into two separate houses. Nottingham University searched for relevant details, but they did not emerge. In the sale of Manvers property in 1874, No.s 1 and 2 were offered as one lot but two houses. Mr. Berry, the tenant of No. 2, bought the lot, and at his death left one house to his son and the other to his daughter. The Ralph Allen Town House was offered as a separate lot, let to Mr. Henry Want at £10 p.a. (BRO Accession 0102/A/91).

Meehan in his articles on old Bath houses in *The Beacon* towards the end of the century, mentions how he used to visit the Town House and witness its melancholy decrepitude. The creation of Church Street, and its own lack of accommodation, had turned it into a slum tenement. The picture of 1882 reproduced on the back cover of the present journal, witnesses to the same. The curtain wall does not exist in this drawing nor any sign of it. If indeed it existed, one does not know when it was demolished. If of wood, it may have burnt down, or it may have been removed when No.s 1 and 2 were separated.

Eventually Messrs. Crisp Cowley of 7 York Street acquired the Ralph Allen Town House. It is reported that in 1963 they sold it to the Corporation who then leased it back to them. At some stage the Corporation created a new route through from York Street. Internal access has also been created from Crisp Cowley's offices.

In 1974 the Corporation instigated a conservation programme, with plans drawn up by Bevan Jones. The external door of the Town House was removed and replaced by a window. The Town House is now used for storage, for meetings etc., and maintained in a good state of repair. No. 1 North Parade Passage is used as offices. Mr. Peter Bailey owns No. 2, with the flying freehold over No. 1. The ground floor and basement quarters are let to Demuth's Vegetarian Restaurant and the remainder, with the room over No. 1, has recently been converted into modern living accommodation.

The two houses which were once the Old Post House comprise an historic site in an historic street. One hopes they will receive the public attention they deserve.

We wish to thank Bath Record Office for their assistance in this study, Bath Postal Museum and also Nottingham University, Somerset Record Office and the National Archives.

Our thanks are due to Anthony Brannan, Bernadette Kondrat and Mrs. Connie Smith for research, to Trevor Fawcett for his information on tradesmen, and to everyone else who has assisted us.

As indicated it is hoped that full details of the material on which this article is based can be made available elsewhere as space does not permit them to appear in the present journal.



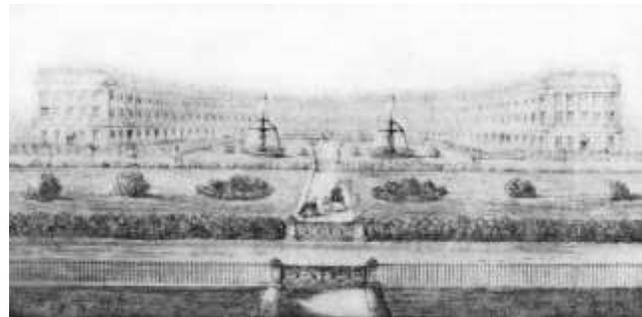
The blocked-in Tudor fireplace in the cellar of the Ralph Allen Town House, with a smaller fireplace inserted into the right side. See also page 54.

Photograph: Mike Chapman, published by permission of Messrs. Crisp Cowley, Estate Agents.

BATH AND THE ORNAMENTAL PUBLIC FOUNTAIN

Mike Chapman

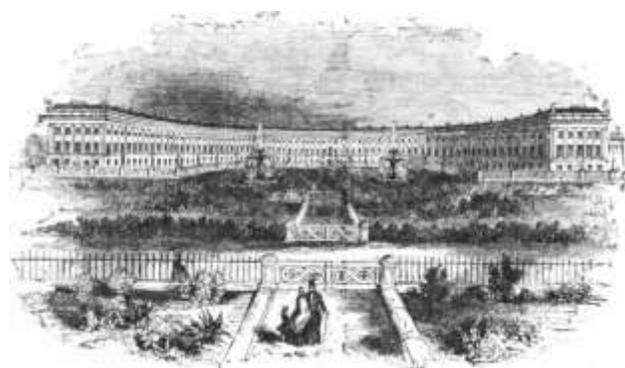
Though the present-day observer might gain the impression that the city has no interest in public fountains, this was not always the case, and indeed, in the mid-19th century it seems to have even suffered from a 'fountain mania'. By that time it was realized that the 'great days' of the spa were over, and that it had become necessary actively to promote the city, perhaps through the use of the newly developing technology. New amenities, including a swimming bath, were now available following the acquisition of a 3hp steam engine in 1831 which could pump the hot mineral water into a cooling reservoir, and publicity for the spa was now being advertised in railway stations throughout the country thanks to the rapid development of the railway system. It was also thought that the general attractiveness of the city itself could be enhanced by hydraulic engineering in the form of ornamental public fountains, a few having already been introduced into Bath by various private institutions such as the Sydney Gardens (in 1840) and Lyncombe 'Spa' (by 1845). As early as 1837, even the Victoria Park obelisk, designed by the architect George Manners, was to have included a fountain consisting of dolphins at each corner throwing jets of water into a surrounding basin, although these were eventually omitted.



Above: The design for the fountains in front of the Royal Crescent, lithograph by Charles James Maggs.

Below: A wood-engraving of the same in the *Bath & Cheltenham Gazette*.

Left: Manners' Victoria Obelisk, with fountains.



The Public Fountains Committee

When a proposal was made in May 1850 for a planned scheme of public fountains in Bath, a sixty-member 'General Committee for Promoting the Erection of Public Fountains in this City' was quickly formed representing 'the gentry, clergy, professions and trades of the city', presided over by the Mayor and supported by Mr. Mitchell the City Engineer. This scheme, which attracted great interest from the local press, was to consist of a series of fountains, each feeding the next below it in succession, including (from the top) one in St. James's Square, a pair in front of the Royal Crescent, one in the Circus, two in Queen Square, and one in Laura Place. It was also thought possible to complete Manners' original design for the Victoria Park obelisk, together with a similar arrangement around the obelisk in Orange Grove. Public health could also benefit if some of the water could be used for a fountain in Kingsmead Square 'for supplying the poor with an abundance of that useful element ... the surplus flowing into and purifying the drains of that thickly populated locality'. It transpired that this scheme, proposed by James

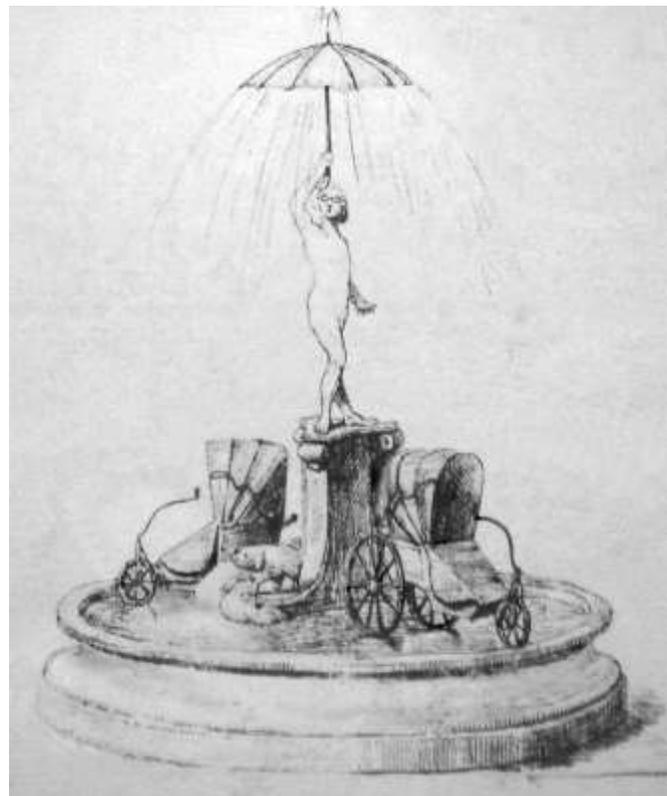
Maggs (member of a prominent local family of artists and craftsmen), had already been put forward in 1843 by another member of the Committee, the architect Henry.E.Goodridge, who displayed the original drawings he had then made for the Crescent.

The supply of water was not thought to be a problem, owing to the many springs in the surrounding hills, but it was soon found that most of these sources had already been acquired for the city's water supply and that the value of spring-water was at a high premium. Several landowners outside the city were approached, such as Major Blathwayt who offered his spring behind the Hare & Hounds on Lansdown, but these all had to be abandoned on account of the expense in collecting and conducting the water from so great a distance. A reduced scheme was therefore put forward by the City Engineer which involved pumping and purifying water from the river by means of a steam engine to a reservoir on the High Common or Beacon Hill. As a trial, it was decided to erect an 'exemplar' in Laura Place - perhaps with others in the Grove or the Institution Gardens - which could be supplied temporarily with river water provided by Mr.Saunders of the Town Mills who agreed to lend one of his 4hp water wheels for the pumping. A competition was then announced for a design for the Laura Place fountain to be submitted by local artists, and a subscription was set up to cover the cost with a further promise of financial assistance from the City Improvement Society.

In December a design was chosen out of ten entries, the winning competitor being Mr.Frederick English jnr. of Eaton Villa, Camden Place, who belonged to a family of cabinet-makers in Milsom Street. The runner-up was the later City Architect, Charles E.Davis. The design was described as having an octagonal basin with a pedestal of rushes surrounded by heroic-sized figures of river gods. Above them was another basin in the form of a clam-shell containing a group of three allegorical figures of mermaids, with a cluster of reeds and water lilies rising above them. The water would be emitted from their blossoms and flowers, and after falling into the shell, would then overflow into the lower basin. The stone would come from the same quarry in Box as was used some fifteen years earlier for the fountains erected by the Marquis of Lansdown at Bowood, the Marquis of Bath at Longleat, and the Hon.Mr.Henry Fox Talbot at Lacock Abbey, all of which had stood the test of time.



The fountain designed by Frederick English for Laura Place



The mock design for the fountain accompanying the lampoon by Walter Savage Landor

The Great Exhibition

Unfortunately, this all came at a moment when public attention was increasingly directed towards the forthcoming Great Exhibition in London. Bath was well-known for its artists and craftsmen, and local interest was focussed on those who were busy preparing masterpieces to be entered for the opening of the Exhibition in March 1851. The organization for this event in Bath was run by a 48-strong committee with two secretaries, including Dr.Tunstall, resident MO at the General Hospital, and the Secretary of the Fountains Committee, Mr.W.Akerman. On this occasion however, the promotional work, including the negotiations with the GWR for the excursion trains, was carried out by Mr.James Williams, an engineer with premises at 18 Westgate Buildings. Williams himself had his own exhibits, including a portable steam engine, a lathe, drilling machine, &c., and provided much technical assistance to the quarry firms in Box who were also exhibiting new machinery. Naturally the cabinet makers were well represented among the contributors, including the abovementioned Messrs.English of Milsom Street. Anticipating an influx of foreign visitors to Bath as a result of the Exhibition, it was hoped that the new fountain would be ready by May, but by April public interest in the project had fallen to such a degree, together with a 'luke-warmness of the majority of the committee', that it was completely abandoned.

The First Mineral Water Fountain

The next proposal did not come until September 1855 when the inhabitants of the Abbey Church Yard approached the City Council for their consent to the erection of a fountain in the Church Yard. On the advice of Mr.Boshier, superintendent of the Baths, and James Williams, the engineer mentioned above, consent was given subject to approval of the plans by the City Act Committee. The reason for the involvement of these two gentlemen was that it was intended to use surplus hot mineral water for the purpose, pumped up by the steam engine in the baths which Williams, then employed on the machinery there, estimated would have sufficient power. A Fountain Committee was therefore set up, with Williams as hon.sec., and assurance being given by Mr.R.Stothert, solicitor for the Abbey rector, that the claim of the Abbey Authorities of a right of way between the church and the White Hart would not be an obstruction to the scheme. A subscription was raised, and Williams was authorized to write to local architects soliciting for designs for the fountain.

As might be expected the scheme attracted much controversy. Many thought the site unsuitable or, like the poet Walter Savage Landor, then living in Bath, that fountains were unsuitable for this city in any case. It was apparently he who published a private pamphlet containing a mock design, together with the following dedication:

A Rejected design for a Fountain

Yes! Rejected by a Committee of Taste (query Muffs).

This design has been published at the request of a numerous and admiring circle of friends, who are of opinion that an enlightened public cannot fail to appreciate its beauty and fitness as an embellishment to the western front of our time honoured and venerable Abbey.

What though the dream of Bishop King be lost in spray.

Is it not right that the barbarous attempts of our ancestors should be swamped on the triumphant tide of modern improvement, even as the Roman temple gave way to the Gothic pile.

As the public are so enlightened, it can hardly be necessary to explain our design.

Bladud prince of Chairmen is represented risen from his bath with health renewed. And tears of gratitude dropping from his patent German Umbrella, while his happy aerated pigs frolic around him and participate in his joy.

Dedicating our design without permission to the enlightened Public, we sign ourselves.

A Bath Brick
Oct.24 1855

Among the supporters for the scheme was the City Surveyor, who saw that it could provide a useful facility for watering the streets (increasingly troubled by dust from the introduction of Macadamised surfacing), which he estimated would make a saving of £55 per annum.



The hot mineral water fountain in Bath Street by Henry Palmer

In October two designs were chosen, both by Mr. Henry Palmer of James Street, 'an eminent upholsterer' and gutta-percha dealer, whose speciality loo-tables for cards were accorded particular praise when they were entered for the Great Exhibition. However, before proceeding further it was decided that 'the names of the Battles in the Crimea' should be left out, and that wooden models should be made to find the best location. The expense of the models was born by the eminent and wealthy architect William (later Sir William) Tite, one of Bath's M.P.s. and an interested advisor to the scheme. The models were finished in April, but not found to be 'in keeping with the colossal proportions of the Abbey', and the open space nearby at the entrance to Bath Street, then used as a cab-stand, was tried instead. One of the models was thought to be most satisfactory in these surroundings, and the Town Council gave the go-ahead for its erection which was hoped to be completed in time for the peace celebrations on 29 May 1856 for the end of the Crimean War.

No sooner was the work begun, than an enterprising tradesman nearby in No.15 Bath Street seized the opportunity to distinguish his premises by the title "Fountain House". Although on the day of the Peace Festival much of the ornamentation remained to be added, and the pipes for the hot water were yet to be finished, the fountain was brought into action by connecting it to the cold water supply from the street main. The effect was declared most satisfactory by the Mayor and Corporation who walked in procession from the Abbey to witness its inauguration. By the end of June the fountain was complete, and a pipe was connected to the bottom of Swallow Street where the water carts could be filled with a hose. There was a delay in the subscriptions being paid, but the deficiency appears to have been made up by a series of six fund-raising concerts in the Guildhall by the city's Hanovarian Band.

Built of Bath stone, the fountain consisted of a circular basement reservoir about 22 feet in diameter and about 4 feet in depth, with a buttressed square central column about 16 feet high. Above this there was an enormous flat vase or dish (or '*tasso*') surmounted by a smaller vase from which a pipe jetted the steaming water about a foot into the air. Falling back into the large dish, the water then spilled over into the reservoir. Water also poured out of the mouths of four lions in the middle of the column on each side. The mason who carried out the work is not mentioned, but the most likely candidate would have been John Vaughan of Raby Place and Sydney Wharf, Bathwick, sculptor and builder. Vaughan, who owned a bath stone quarry at Lodge Style, Combe Down, was possibly the leading mason in Bath at that time, whose work not only included Beckford's Tower on Lansdown and the Abbey restoration, but who also specialized in ornamental vases, one of which, exhibited at the Great Exhibition, received much acclaim.

By the end of August however, everything seemed to be going wrong. It had been forgotten that the mineral water contains iron oxide, so that the fountain soon became stained red and, sited in the middle of a busy thoroughfare, it tended to splash the surrounding area with water. The basin quickly filled with rubbish or was used as a play area for street urchins, and the water often returned to the Reservoir or to Swallow Street in a polluted condition. To make matters worse, the supply was often erratic or reduced,

so that the fountain usually played for only three or four hours a day. Instead of publicizing the health benefits of the mineral water, as intended, the fountain was rapidly becoming an embarrassing eye-sore nick-named 'The Bath Folly'. There were some however who argued that it served its purpose well. In its defence, a pamphlet was published entitled *New Physiological Views; with an Appendix on the Bath Thermal Waters*, by W.Parker, M.R.C.S., L.A.C., which gives much useful information about the fountain, including a lithograph (shown here) taken from a photograph.

Plans for Victoria Park

In the meantime, fountains were also being planned elsewhere. On 20 November a proposal was advertised in *The Bath Herald* for a Winter Garden on the Middle Common near the Marlborough buildings entrance to Victoria Park (now part of the allotments). This would not only include a large concert hall - as in Manchester, Liverpool, or Birmingham - but also a Pump Room, to be supplied with Bath Water from the Hot Springs in pipes. The surplus water would then be used for ornamental fountains in the grounds, which were to be laid out in the style of the Tuilleries in Paris. The design of the new building (constructed of cast-iron and glass - evidently inspired by the Crystal Palace built for the Great Exhibition) was prepared and promoted by local architect James Wilson, esq., F.S.A., of 1, Belmont. Over the next few decades various other similar schemes were put forward, but eventually in 1876 the Victoria Park Committee decided to reject the whole idea in order to protect the rural character of the Park, 'which has hitherto been considered one of its greatest charms'.

The Second Mineral Water Fountain

By October 1858, the state of the fountain in Bath Street had become so bad that James Williams, representing the Fountain Committee, was requested to report to the Baths and Pump Rooms Committee. In response, he offered to make various alterations at his own expense which would answer all their objections and, in collaboration with Signor Stephano Pieroni, presented several designs for their approval. After many months of deliberation a suitable design was eventually chosen on condition that the new fountain was presented to the city on completion. Erected in June 1859, the new design consisted of a statue of Bladud as a swineherd (replacing the large *tasso*) situated on the top of an open arched 'pavilion' (replacing the column) with the water jet safely contained within its centre. On each corner of the plinth were further statues of the four seasons, the plinth itself inscribed STEFANO VALLERIO PIERONI ERECT 1859. The rim of the lower basin was then cut down to its base and replaced with iron railings. The question of the quality of statuary in the city was much debated at the time, particularly in the case of the proposed Rebecca drinking fountain by the Abbey, and it is possibly for this reason that original suggestions for Mermaids (or Minerva, Aesculapius or Venus Rising from the Bath) around the fountain were rejected. An offer was also made by the Licensed Victuallers Association to add a cold water fountain to the structure (presumably for drinking), but this does not appear to have been taken up.



Left: The second hot mineral water fountain in Bath Street, designed by Stephano Pieroni, whose advertisements (below) appeared in the Postal Directories. Note 'Fountain House' in the background.



More Plans for Victoria Park

The designer of the new fountain, Stephano Valeriano Pieroni, was a naturalized British subject from Tuscany who lived at No.4 Bath Street which he later ran as a beer house called The Eagle Hotel. By occupation he was advertised as a ‘figure modeller in plaster and artificial stone’ working from a studio in Parsonage Lane. Whether he carved the statuary himself is not clear, but his work with the fountain led to his involvement in improvements to Victoria Park the following year. Two plans for the Park were proposed in 1860; the first, announced in May, was not carried out, but included the installation of cascades and a fountain. Filtered river water was to be pumped by steam power (by “Fryer’s Water-Raising Apparatus”) to a pond at the upper corner of Park Lane, where it would flow back down through cascades in the upper and lower dells before passing under an ornamental bridge to a fountain by the Pond. Another cascade could be formed below the pond before returning the water to the river through the drains, ‘unless the inhabitants of Norfolk Crescent desired to make use of it first to adorn the centre of their lawn’.

The second plan, proposed in July, involved Pieroni and a colleague, Mr. Corbould of the Lamb Inn in Stall Street, who had been notified by Mr. Brewer, a mason, that there was an eight feet high statue lying in his yard in Box which they learned was of the ‘Goddess of Sculpture’, the work of John Osborne, the self-taught artist of Bath who carved the fine head of Jupiter in the upper dell in the Park. Carved some 25 years earlier out of a single block of Bath stone, the statue was originally intended to occupy a niche in some building, but never reached its destination. Surprisingly, this highly-finished piece of work remained in excellent condition. As the owner was disposing of his stock-in-trade, Messrs. Corbould and Pieroni purchased the figure, together with several elegant vases, all of which they offered for erection in the Park. At the same time Pieroni proposed himself to present a stone carved vase, described as ‘a beautiful specimen of artistic skill ... seven feet in diameter, and therefore one of the largest vases in the kingdom’, and which, ‘if filled with earth and planted with flowers would have a grand appearance’. This vase, inscribed with Pieroni’s name on the plinth, is now a familiar landmark in the flower garden by the Brock Street entrance. By comparison with the lithograph of the first mineral water fountain, it is evident that this vase was actually the *tasso* taken by down by Pieroni (refurbished for some other public use) in exchange for his statue of Bladud.

By the end of April 1861 the necessary funds for the installation of these pieces had been raised by private contributions, and Pieroni’s ‘large vase’ was already in course of erection, ‘near the Brock-street gate’. The remaining items were also in place in July, including the Goddess of Sculpture, placed upon a pedestal designed by the architect James Wilson (mentioned above) ‘at the left-hand side of the path leading round the lawn on which the Hanoverian Band plays, entering by Brock street gate’. Unfortunately, this statue seems to have disappeared long ago, and nothing further is heard of it.



Right: the Park Vase (without flowers) presented by Signor Pieroni.

PICKWICK IRON WORKS,
BROAD QUAY, BATH.

J. WILLIAMS,
ENGINEER & MILLWRIGHT,
Steam Engine, Lathe, and Machine Tool Maker,
Beautifully fitted STEAM ENGINES—Metal to Metal Joints.
£10 per Horse Power.
Cylindrical Best-best STEAM BOILERS, with all necessary Fittings
and Furnace, £7 : 10s. per Horse Power.

Left: advert for Williams’ Pickwick Ironworks,

The Third Mineral Water Fountain

Perhaps Pieroni had been inspired by his associate James Williams, who had also made a contribution to public works in the Park a few years earlier. When a pair of Russian guns from the Crimean War was presented to the city as a trophy in 1857, Williams presented the ornamental gun-carriages, cast at Woolwich arsenal, on which they were mounted on each side of the Victoria Obelisk. Some two years before this he had expanded his engineering business into premises on the Town Quay which he named the ‘Pickwick Iron Works’ (his original premises were presumably in Pickwick Mews in Avon Street). By the 1870s however he had been given a municipal post as Inspector of Gas Meters & consulting

engineer, and eventually gave up the business on the Quay. It was also about this time that the mineral water fountain had not only become, like its predecessor, dilapidated and an eyesore, but was no longer in use because the large amount of water required for it was no longer available. In May 1873, when the Council finally recommended its removal, Williams requested that, because he had been involved in its erection 'he would be glad, having a lingering affection for such antique relics, if the Council would allow him to transport it [the statue of Bladud] to his residence at Entry Hill'. This was agreed, and the figures were removed on 15 May. Williams had only recently moved to a house in Entry Hill, previously called 'Vale View', but henceforth renamed 'Bladud Villa', as it remains to this day.



Left: the third hot mineral water fountain in the 1930s with [above] the drinking tap.

Above: detail of the drinking tap.

Although the Council was glad to be rid of Bladud (and the Four Seasons), it was reluctant to abandon the structure altogether. Various suggestions were made that it would be a good site for an ornamental tree, a cold-water drinking fountain, or even for the old Bath Pillory which at that time stood in the Wells Road 'and could be purchased for £10'! Its eventual use however seems to have developed accidentally over the next few months, when the Council Surveyor was requested to make the site as slightly as possible without alteration to the structure. The railings were retained, and the enclosure decorated with plants and shrubs supplied by members of the Park Committee. Some stone vases were loaned by Messrs. Nurse and Bladwell, one of which was purchased and placed on the top where Bladud stood. In the following March there had been some discussion whether the site might be used for a central ticket office for the baths, but this was rejected in favour of the Attendants Room adjoining the newly-built Grand Pump Room Hotel which replaced the old White Hart Inn.

It was finally decided that the structure should be provided with a free hot mineral water drinking fountain or conduit - probably in June 1874 when its tap is mentioned in a report by the Surveying Committee. The hot water could be drunk from a heavy metal cup attached to the basin by a chain. For their health, some local people drank this water on a regular basis, or took it home in a bottle. This new amenity was possibly connected with the removal of the free 'Paupers' Pump', a hand-operated lift pump, with cup, which had been installed in the early 19th century under the portico of John Wood the Younger's Hot Bath building. In the 1860s it was remarked that people other than the poor were using this amenity instead of the Hetling Pump Room opposite, but it had disappeared by 1875 when the Pump Room was closed and removed to the Hot Bath.



The Paupers' Pump at the Hot Bath in 1829. The pump and pump handle can just be seen inside the portico.

The Laura Place Fountain

The end of the 'Fountain Era' in Bath occurred a few years later in 1877, when a cold water fountain was again proposed, by the 'general Committee for Promoting the Erection of Public Fountains in the City', in the centre of Laura Place to mark the centenary of the founding of the Bath & West Society. Architects were invited to submit designs, '..simple, but bold and handsome ... the size and height in accordance with the surroundings', to be constructed of Bath stone, Ham Hill stone or Pennant. Interestingly, the winning design on this occasion was by Alfred S.Goodridge, son of Henry.E.Goodridge (mentioned above) who was involved with the first scheme in 1850. However, the subscriptions fell short of the cost of £595, and application was made to the Town Council for a grant of £100. The Council had no legal powers to do this, but the day was saved by voluntary contributions made by individual Council members. Unlike the Bath Street fountain, it was built in Gothic style to a great height on three tiers of columns, with two upper dishes overflowing into a lower basin surrounded with chain railings. When the fountain was finally inaugurated on 14 July 1880, it was attended by a crowd of 6,000 spectators, 4,000 of whom were Sunday School children. Earlier problems over the water supply were evidently overcome, to the benefit of the Town Council who were able to use the fountain for street watering. In this case water carts filled up directly from the basin by means of a siphon.



Laura Place with the Fountain c.1910. Note the watering cart and curved siphon.

The Results of Earlier Efforts

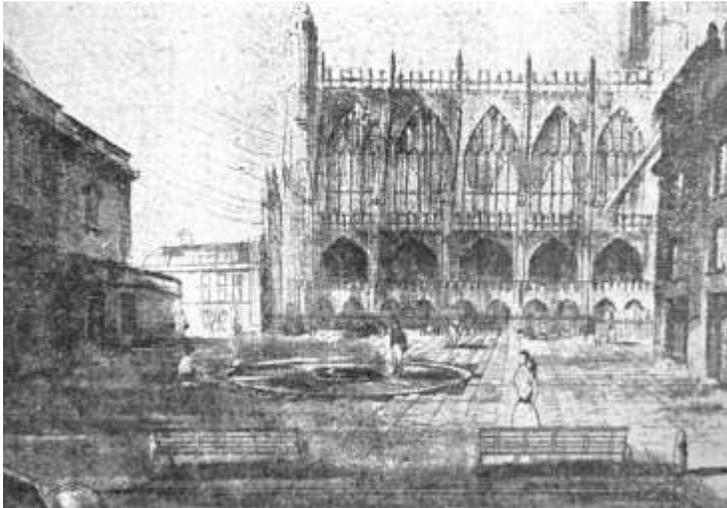
Despite all the plans for fountains made during the latter part of the 19th century, only two fountains were actually built. The mineral water fountain has since been maintained and, on two occasions, restored, first after WWI when the whole structure had become hidden under the growth of ivy from the shrubbery at its base. The railings were removed for the war effort during WWII, but replaced when the fountain was again restored in 1977 by Wessex Newspapers. Unfortunately in the following year the supply of mineral water had to be cut off owing to the Amoeba scare. Unable to fulfil its prime function, the whole structure was finally removed to its present position on Terrace Walk in 1989, the former site now marked by the brass World Heritage Site plaque set in the road surface. The original central jet under the pavilion has been brought back into use, but now supplied with cold water.

There is a further post-script to this fountain, or rather, its second incarnation. When James Williams left Bladud Villa in about 1900, only a few years before his death, it would appear that the statue of Bladud was acquired by his neighbour Mr.George E.Spear, member of the well-known local family of pork butchers in Southgate Street, who erected it in his garden next door at 'Springfield'. Subsequently this

house became a B&NES nursing home, where the statue (carved out of two blocks of bath stone) has remained in good condition in the garden. Recently it was removed to safe storage, perhaps for re-erection in a suitable public place.

As for the fountain in Laura Place, this too has been maintained, but now bears little resemblance to its original design. In the late 1940s it had become unsafe and was dismantled, the basin being used as a flower-bed to celebrate the Festival of Britain in 1951. Although re-installed in reduced form in 1960, it was eventually replaced by the present simple design in 1977 to mark the second centenary of the founding of the Bath and West Society.

However, the idea of fountains has never been completely given up. In 1957, for example, the area on the south side of the Abbey, formerly the site of the Kingston Baths, merely contained a glass dome surrounded by an 8ft high balustrade which served to illuminate the eastern Roman Baths below. Since this structure had become unsafe and leaked rainwater which damaged the remains, a plan was drawn up by Bath architects Gerrard, Taylor and Partners for an open paved piazza. The baths underneath the paving would be illuminated with new display methods, and in the centre of the piazza there was to be a bronze replica of the Gorgon's head 'from which would flow the natural mineral water'. Unfortunately the scheme proved too costly, and only the open piazza (the present Kingston Parade) was completed in 1959 - without the fountain.



Above: Kingston Parade, as visualised in 1957, with the bronze Gorgon's head fountain.



Right: Pieroni's statue of Bladud, as it stood on the terrace of 'Springfield' nursing home. The head appears out of proportion owing to the *entasis* needed for it to be viewed from below.

Sources

Most of the information contained here was obtained from contemporary newspaper reports, or from Bath Council Minutes, with thanks to Colin Johnston of the Guildhall Archives and the staff of Bath Central Library. Other useful sources include:

Mary Ede, 'Bath and the Great Exhibition of 1851', *Bath History III*, 1990

Neil Jackson, *Nineteenth Century Bath Architects and Architecture*, 1991

James Lees-Milne & David Ford, *Images of Bath*, 1982

Robin Whalley, 'The Royal Victoria Park', *Bath History V*, 1994



Left: the gap between No.2 North Parade Passage (left) and the Ralph Allen Town House (right). The lit window behind the gap belongs to No.1 North Parade Passage.

Indications of keyed mortar can be seen running down the corner of the wall next to the drain pipe of No.2 North Parade Passage. This, together with the missing end of the cornice, would tend to suggest an insubstantial screen wall between the two buildings at some stage.

Photograph: Mike Chapman

Below: The interior of the first floor room of the Ralph Allen Town House, west side. Note the model of the House next to the clock.

Photograph: Mike Chapman, published by permission of Messrs.Crisp Cowley, Estate Agents.



**BATH'S MUNICIPAL ALLOTMENTS
PART 2**

Malcolm Hitchcock

The expansion during the Second World War

We ended Part 1 at 1939, during which in May the Ministry of Agriculture requested that the Council should not permit the release of any land for any other purpose than of food production. In September, after war had been declared another Cultivation of Lands Order demanded that it should look again at the local land stock. The role of the Government in controlling national food supply during the wartime period is mentioned in Appendix 3.

During 1939 and early 1940 the Committee continued the search for new sites from private owners, but the breakthrough came after a Special Meeting on 22 July 1940 when the decision was taken to plough up the Municipal Parks. The Parks Department was instructed to carry out the work and also to oversee and advise upon all local non-commercial food production. The meeting was chaired by the Mayor and attended by representatives from all the Council Departments that were affected – the Allotments Committee, and Housing, Parks, and Corporate Property Committees, as well as the Bath and District Gardeners Society. The Parks Department would start by digging up Ring Common behind Marlborough Buildings (site 38), and set out a Demonstration Plot there as well as others at Bloomfield and Englishcombe. A Prize/Award scheme would be introduced, not only for allotment holders, but also for people growing vegetables in their gardens on Housing Estates. The first Award Ceremony took place on 13 January 1941 in the Pump Room, followed by a film entitled *A Garden Goes to War*. The report from the *Chronicle* is attached as Appendix 2.

Ring Common opened on October 1940; this was followed in the next two years by Middle Common (site 52, approximately the venue nowadays of the Annual Flower Show), High Common (site 41, which is still an allotment site) and then the land opposite Cavendish Place (sites 46 & 55). Royal Crescent (site 60) was the last to be converted, opening in April 1943 – however the residents in the Crescent, owners of the Lawn immediately in front, refused permission the following December, and this was never cultivated.

So by the end of 1943 the major expansion was complete, the number of plots having risen to 2144 covering some 130 acres, compared with 854 when war was declared. Two aerial photographs showing the extent of the cultivated allotment land are attached. Figure A shows the sites in the Municipal Parks, which were discussed above, and Figure B the allotments occupying the large tract of land south of the river from Englishcombe Lane to the Somerset and Dorset Railway.

Unfortunately because all the records of the Parks Department have been lost or destroyed, and the Minutes of the Allotment Committee at this period give few details, it is no longer possible to understand how such a major expansion was achieved or serviced. It is probable that the plots were ploughed up using horses rather than being hand dug, and it is unlikely that water was laid on to any new sites. In 1938 a decision had been taken to provide a water supply to Bloomfield, Canal Gardens, Fairfield and Lower Common since these sites had no natural supply from streams. Others such as Englishcombe could take water from the Monksdale Brook, which flowed through the site – and still does, on its serpentine course through the Monksdale playground. However water had been installed only at Lower Common by the time war was declared, and there is no evidence that any of the wartime sites were given piped water. So plottolders improvised. At Canal Gardens they siphoned water from the canal, and at High Common they rigged up a water catchment system. It is probable that standpipes were erected on adjacent streets but this could still mean a long walk for many with heavy watering cans.

Bath, unlike Ealing where I grew up, did not appear to have a municipally organised centralised supply system of seeds and fertilizers for allotment holders, so one may assume that these were obtained from the seven local seedsman and eighteen ironmongers that were listed in the *Bath Directory* in 1940.

The immediate Post-war Years

As the war ended the Allotments Committee, sitting on the only bank of developable land within the City, came under pressure from several quarters.

In 1944 the Housing Department in *A Plan for Bath* (Ref.1) had drawn up schemes for Municipal Housing when the war was over at Moorfields, Odd Down and Twerton, together with space for schools, much of this on land occupied by allotments; also private landowners who had leased their land for the duration of the war now requested that this be returned. On the other hand there was an acute food shortage (I remember my parents' anger and disbelief when bread was rationed in 1946) not helped by the dreadful winter of 1947, and during this time messages were received from the Ministry of Agriculture that the need was greater than ever.

There was also a long waiting list; in November 1948 there were 7 plots not being worked and 221 applications. Over two years later, in July 1950, when the Labour Government wanted to return that reminder of the war years – the allotments in front of the Royal Crescent - back to grassy open space in time for the Festival of Britain, a petition to prevent it was presented to the Council. The citizens of Bath clearly still had their spades sharpened. They dug in, and prevailed.

In the face of all these conflicting views the Committee adopted the obvious policy. It continued to cultivate all municipally-held land not designated for housing including the parks, released the smallest and most difficult rented sites, renegotiated the others, and 'ran ahead' of the house building programme with new temporary sites until the land was needed, which often took a long time due to a post-war shortage of building materials. In 1948 it also opened one important site that is still in use today – on the top slopes of Lyncombe Hill, on land that forty years earlier had been rejected by the surveyors as being too exposed and having soil of insufficient depth. In exchange it returned Alexandra Park the next year.

So in spite of the Council divesting itself of plots after the war the overall number continued to *increase*. The high point was 1952, when there were an astonishing 2493 Municipal Allotments occupying about 150 acres – equal to one third of the total area occupied by that other resort frequented by the rich and famous – Monaco. However, the national mood was changing, and the long decline in interest in growing vegetables was about to begin.

The Decline to Dereliction 1952-1968

At the beginning of 1952 the allotment movement seemed to be in rude health. The Bath Extension Act of 1951 which moved outlying parishes such as Weston inside the City Boundary meant that the Committee had more plots to administer, whilst at the same time permanent sites were being laid out on the edge of planned Municipal Housing – for example, four acres was set aside between Day Crescent and the Pennyquick stream in West Twerton.

However, changes were imminent, as private developers then increased their demands, supported by a Conservative Government facing an acute housing shortage. In 1953 the Bathwick Estate applied for all the allotment land to be handed back to them in the vicinity of Sham Castle Lane, and the housing estate centred on St. Anne's Way was built in the next two years. They also built at the Trossachs and Minster Way on allotment land that they already owned. On the other side of the river the Solsbury Way estate below Raglan Lane was built on a large private site that had been allotments for at least fifty years. Building started at Lansdown and Broadmoor Lanes in Upper Weston.

Middle Common was returned to pasture in March 1955, displaced plotters being accommodated on vacancies on adjacent sites. In May of that year the Council Allotments and Small Holdings Committee was wound up, and its responsibilities transferred to the Parks Department. One of its last decisions was to close Royal Crescent Field in March 1956. From now on the Minutes, which were always cryptic in only recording decisions taken and omitting the discussions and strategy that led to them, became even shorter as the Parks Department had many other things to discuss beside allotments. The public mood was

changing also, people preferring to drive around in new Ford Anglias with reverse-sloping windows than grubbing around in gumboots on rainy afternoons.

For the remainder of the Fifties and early Sixties there were few changes. A decision to provide water to all sites was taken in 1958; also in that year the site at St. Saviours Larkhall was taken under the Council's wing – their final acquisition. But over this period public interest continued to slip away and in 1962 Bath's largest sites were closed – Englishcombe for municipal housing south of the river, and most of the remaining large sites on public parks beyond the Royal Crescent, because, to quote Stan Hitt, who subsequently became the Parks Superintendent, 'the Council thought that more people wanted to play golf than dig potatoes'. There were protests. 181 tenants were to be displaced, 30 of which could not be found places on the two sites that remained at High Common and Ring Common and the Council Chamber was invaded at their meeting on 18 June. Some plots were halved, partly to spread the load, and also in response to claims that 300 square yards was now too much to manage.

The decline in interest continued with the Council gently shedding spare sites. The minutes of February 1967 give an indication of the state of the allotment movement at the time:-

SITE	NAME	PLOTS		ACTION – CLOSE, and MOVE TENANTS
		Total	Derelict	
40	Tynning	11	8	to Abbey View
49	Larkhall Plain Ham	44	35	to site 1
32	Rush Hill	12	10	to Mendip Gdns
15	Lansdown View	72	52	to Lower Common
14	Bloomfield Rd	72	47	to site 7
42	Lyncombe Hill	40	32	to other Lyncombe site

The Final Period – 1970 to the Present

Eight years were to pass before the closure of the next site, in Prior Park Road, where the Prior Park Garden Centre (once named the Fred Daw Centre) now stands. Again there were protests, the Widcombe Allotments and Garden Association implying (if not quite threatening) legal action, and asking for compulsory purchase to which the Council mounted a stout defence. By this time Local Government reorganisations had moved Bath Allotments firstly into Avon in Bristol and then out again in later years into Bath and NE Somerset at Keynsham and perhaps not surprisingly they rather got lost on the way by being too far down any agenda. Thus they slumbered on, largely untended and unloved, but still there (rather like the spa water at about the same time) until the 1990s when the public mood changed again, particularly among the middle classes who now became rather bored with being gridlocked by traffic in their Ford Mondeos. When I applied for a plot at Canal Gardens in 1991 I had a choice from about six overgrown and very brambly plots. Now there is an eighteen-month waiting list.

The current position was given in the Introduction to Part 1 (*The Survey* 21). There are 19 municipal sites in Bath, and a few others that are affiliated, such as St. Stephens on Lansdown.

Conclusion

Two groups can be proud of their role and achievement in this story:-

Firstly the Bath City Council, for uprising to the occasion superbly in time of national need, and also having the foresight to hang on to allotment land against the future through the long period when they were deeply unfashionable.

Secondly, the citizens of Bath, often women while the men were away, who toiled, sweated and shed a few tears for over one hundred years to provide for their families.

Reference 1: A Plan for Bath. Abercrombie et al, Bath 1945.

Appendix 1

The Survey of Bath and District No.22, October 2007
New Sites and Site Closures since 1945

New Sites

- 1948 Upper Lyncombe Hill 3 acres, 40 plots. Extant.
Moorlands 3 acres, 77 plots. Temporary, until houses were built.
1951 Avon Park. Small site. Extant.
1952 Day Crescent, Twerton. 4 acres to Pennyquick stream. Now mostly playing field.

In addition other sites previously outside the City boundary at Weston and Combe Down were incorporated.

Sites Closed

- | | | | |
|------|--|------|---|
| 1946 | Osborne Rd site 17 | 1960 | Greenway Lane site 33 |
| | Bay Tree Farm site 50 | 1961 | Entry Hill site 45 |
| | Sladebrook Rd site 59 | 1962 | The year of major closure |
| | Haute Combe site 30 | | Englishcombe site 8 |
| | Frys Leaze site 23 (but then reprieved until 1953) | | High Common - Cavendish site 46 |
| | Rush Hill site 32. 2.1 acres released | | High Common - Southeast site 55 |
| | Brassmill Lane site 29. 4.1 acres released | | Lyncombe Hill (Lower) site 42 |
| 1948 | Cleveland Walk site 61 | | Moorlands (Acquired 1948 - see above) |
| | Alexandra Park site 48 | 1964 | Widcombe Hill site 43 |
| 1951 | Victoria Bricks Works site 10 | | Wellsway site 21 |
| 1952 | Henrietta Rd site 28 | | Lower Pennyquick, Twerton |
| 1953 | Mile End site 31 | 1966 | Newbridge Rd/Brassmill Lane - convert to playing fields |
| | Cleveland Walk site 54 | | Moorlands remainder at Chantry Mead |
| | Sham Castle Lane site 39 | | Abbey View - released 500 sq.yds. for garages |
| | Frys Leaze site 23 | 1968 | Lansdown View site 15 |
| 1954 | Rush Hill site 32 | | South Bloomfield site 14 - revert to open space |
| 1955 | Middle Common site 52 | | The Tynning site 40 - revert to open space |
| 1956 | Royal Crescent site 60 | 1969 | Canal Gardens-release 2 acres for Lime Grove School |
| | Odd Down - Three Way site 57 | 1976 | Prior Park Road site 13 |
| | Perrymead site 62 | | |
| | Broadmoor Lane, Weston | | |
| 1957 | Lymore Avenue site 25 | | |
| | Larkhall Plain Ham site 49 | | |

Appendix 2

Report from the *Bath Chronicle* 18 January 1941

**Bath's "Dig for Victory" Campaign
Important part private gardens can play**

Bath's 1941 "Dig for Victory" campaign was inaugurated at the Pump Room on Monday evening at what was undoubtedly the first meeting of gardeners – professional and amateur – ever held in the City. The meeting marked the conclusion of a year which has seen a 50% increase in the number of allotments.

Successful entrants in the allotment competitions, as well as those in the open competition on the housing estates, received at the hands of the Mayor Alderman Aubrey Bateman tangible rewards for their labours. What is more, there are to be prizes again this year, and Mr Robert Menzies who donated a number of gardening tools to the list, is giving more for the competition in the coming season.

Supporting the Mayor, who presided, were the Divisional Inspector of the Ministry of Agriculture, and Chairmen and Secretaries of the Bath Gardeners Society, Council Allotments Committee and Housing Committees.

The Mayor thanked the Bath Gardeners Society for giving the citizens of Bath the opportunity to see the film *A Garden goes to War* which was the main object of the meeting. He was delighted to see such a large audience, which showed the enthusiasm in Bath in growing more food in this present emergency. It was proposed to conduct similar competitions during the coming season and the Allotments Committee

would be very disappointed if there were not a considerable increase in entries.

It is of interest to note that at the outbreak of war Bath had 854 allotment plots. Since then 456 additional plots have been provided and the Committee was making arrangements to acquire more land in districts where there was unsatisfied demand. They would all appreciate that the great difficulty in Bath was that they could not take allotments to the people that wanted them. The Divisional Inspector said that in coming to Bath he was preaching to the converted. He was impressed with the number of prizes, and by a notice he saw recently that for a charge to the ratepayers of £27 a year more than 1200 allotments had been provided.

The great object of the “Dig for Victory” campaign was to produce a steady stream of vegetables all the year round. He was concerned to involve not only the allotment holder but also the owner of the private garden who could be brought in to share in this very important campaign. Those accustomed to handling garden tools could be of great service to those taking up growing of vegetables for the first time – that was the practical side of help. The local authority, who had taken the matter in hand, would be able to help on the technical side by providing demonstration allotments. He appealed to those qualified, to help their neighbours who were taking up allotments for the first time. He pointed out the number of special leaflets which the Ministry had published, and the importance of preserving surplus supplies. The meeting was followed by a colour film entitled *A Garden goes to War*, showing the various phases of gardening, including the preparation of the soil after digging up the lawn, spring sowing and planting, control of pests and harvesting and storage of crops with methods of preserving, and finally, the care of fruit trees.

Award Winners – Allotments

H. Hartnell, 21 Arlington Rd (Monksdale)

A. Hull, 3 Beech Grove (Englishcombe)

J. Woodman, 3 Otago Terrace (Larkhall)

C. Richardson, 161 Coronation Ave (Englishcombe)

E. Tanner, 5 Livingstone Terrace (Twerton)

Certificates of merit were also presented to ploholders at Abbey View, Cotswold Rd, Englishcombe, Bloomfield (2), and Twerton (3).

Appendix 3

Food Production and Consumption in World War 2

The Ministry of Food was set up in 1937 to be responsible for food distribution. It introduced Rationing in January 1940, initially on butter, sugar and bacon, but in later years other items were added. The ‘Dig for Victory’ campaign was launched in mid-1940, and this was supported by broadcasts, newspaper articles and booklets in order to increase public awareness about nutrition and home production of vegetables. A report from *The Chronicle* in January 1941 (Appendix 2) gives a clear indication of the local mood at the time.

The most successful booklet on vegetable production was published by the MoF and RHS entitled *The Vegetable Garden Display*, over a quarter million copies of which were printed: it was also translated into German to assist their population avoid starvation after the War. A typical sample is shown below.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Colin Johnston and Lucy Powell in the Bath Record Office for their advice and assistance in making the Council Minutes available, and also the National Monuments Record Office at Swindon, part of English Heritage, who allowed copies of Aerial Photographs from their superb archive to be made in order to identify the location of various sites.



Illustrations from *The Vegetable Garden Display*: Planting beans in the vegetable



1



2

RUNNER BEANS DWARFED

- 1 Runner beans ready for topping.
- 2 First pinching of the plants to dwarf them and to save staking.
- 3 Second pinching; pinching to be repeated weekly.
- 4 Picking for use.

3



4



Illustrations from *The Vegetable Garden Display*: Cultivating Runner Beans

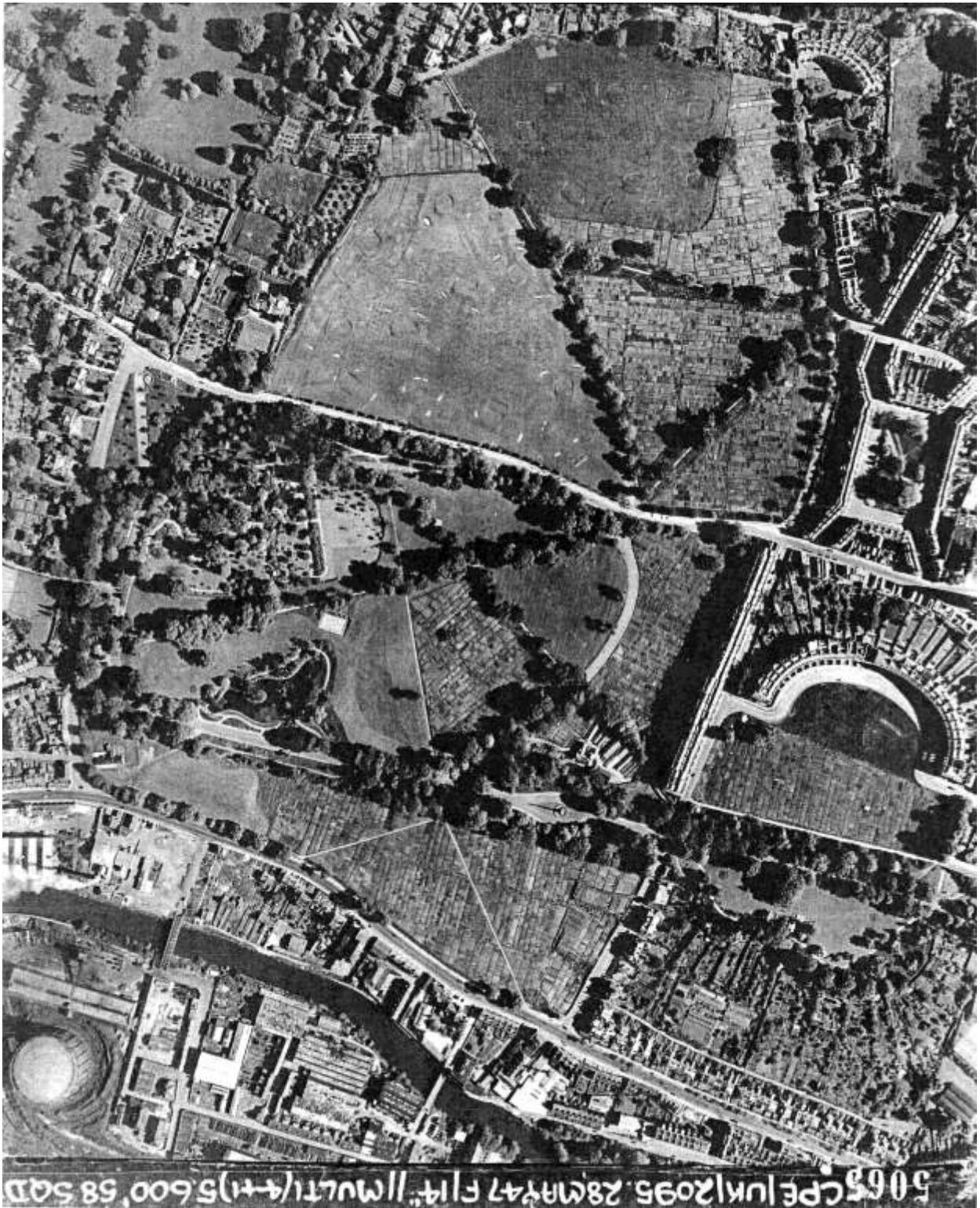


Fig.A. Allotments on the Public Parks. Reproduced by permission from the National Monuments Record Office.

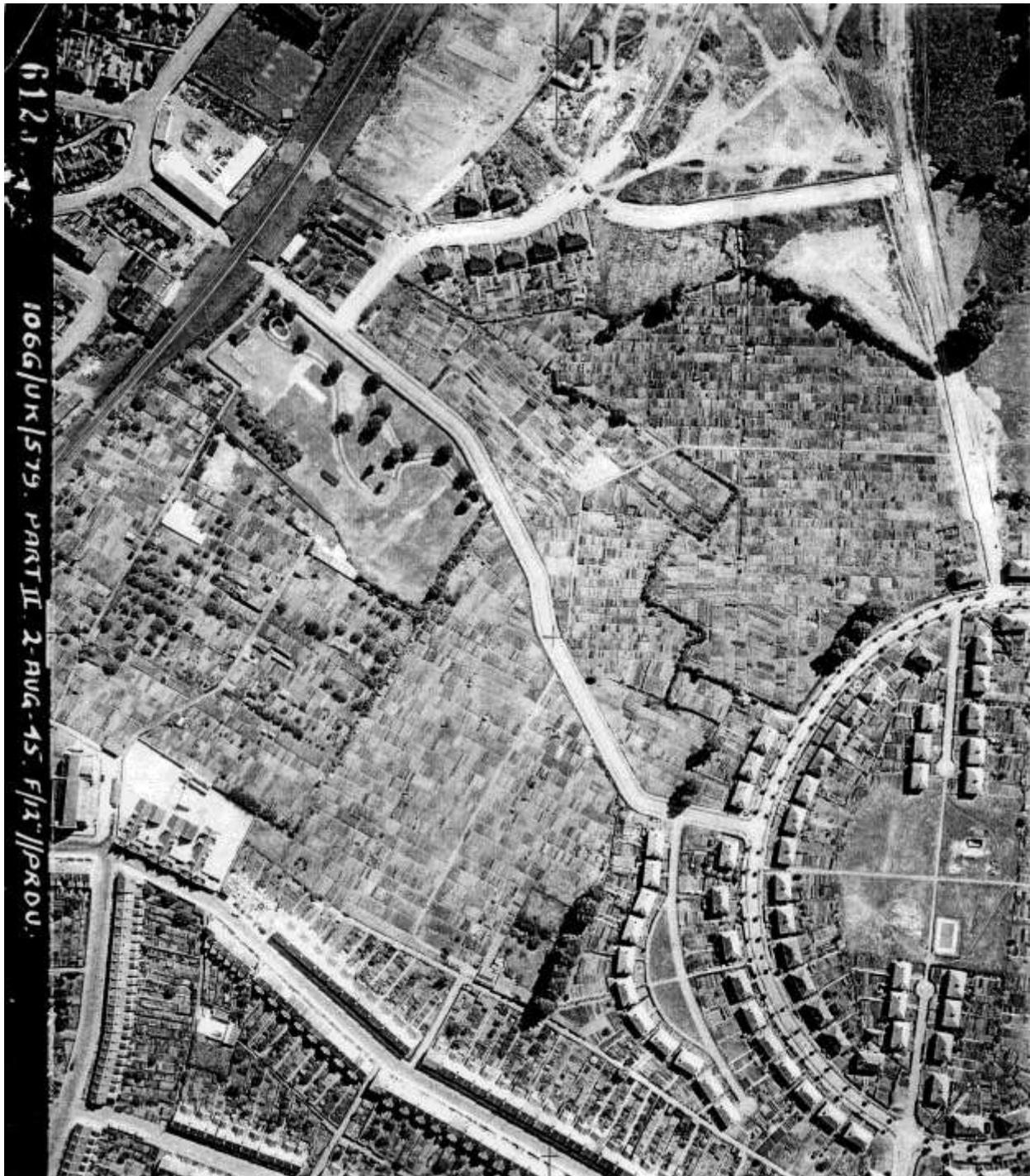


Fig.B. Allotments north of Englishcombe Lane. Reproduced by permission from the National Monuments Record Office.

FRIENDS OF THE SURVEY OF OLD BATH

President: Dr.John Wroughton	Mr.S.George, B&NES	Mr.L.J.Scott
Chairman: Mr.Stephen Marks	Miss K.Gerrett	Dr.S.Sloman
Vice-chairman: Vacant	Mrs.P.G.R.Graham	Mrs.M.Stacey
Treasurer: Mr.John Ennor	Mr.AJ.Green	Professor C.Stirton
Secretary: Vacant	Mr.I.R.C.Harris	Mr.Stoneman-Merrett
Committee: Mr.Bill Chislett Mr.Malcolm Hitchcock (P.R.) Mrs.Hazel Symons	Mrs.F.M.Harrison	Dr.D.W.Straughan
Members: Mr.and Mrs.M.A.E.Adams Professor R.Alexander, U.S.A. Mr.I.Barclay Herr L.Becker, Germany Mr.P.Blackmore Mr.A.G.Brannan Mr.D.Brown Mr.J.M.& Dr.J.Brushfield Mrs.M.Burrows Mr.T.Cairns, New Zealand Mr.R.V.Chapman, Australia Dr.S.Chapman Mrs.M.R.Chislett Mr.S.Clews, Roman Baths Museum Mrs.J.Coates Mrs.D.Collyer Mr.K.Cookes Mr.& Mrs.W.Cope Mrs.Ann Cridland Mr.M.Davis Donald Insall Associates Mr.A.Durie Mrs.S.Edwards	Mrs.R.Haskins Mrs.M.Hawkes Miss B.Holt Mr.L.Holt Mrs.M.Jackson Mr.& Mrs.P.A.H.Jackson, Salford Mr.C. Johnston, B&NES Archivist Mr.K.Jordan Mr.D.P.M.Keeling Mr.A.J.Keevil Dr.G.A.Kellaway, Lyme Regis Mrs.B.E.M.Kondrat Mr.W.H.Leigh Mr.M.Lewcun Mr.D.R.Lovell Mrs.B. Lowe, Keynsham Mr.J.G.Macdonald, Freshford Mr.N.Mattingley Mr.D.McLaughlin Mr.R.Mimmack Mrs.E.Murphy, Bath Preservation Trust Mrs.P.Olver Dr.R.Rolls Mrs.J.Rowe Mr.& Mrs.R.Russell, Batheaston Dr.L.Rutherford, Archivist, Bath Abbey Distr.Judge & Mrs.M.Rutherford	Dr.N.Tiffany, Oxford Mr.M & Mrs.D.Walker Mr.& Mrs.G.White Mr.A.J.Williams Mr.T.Williams Miss A.Woods

Membership Secretary: Mr.John Ennor, 74 Cedric Road, Bath, B&NES, BA1 3PB tel:01225 427864.
Subscription £6 a year, £11 for couples, inclusive of the magazine once yearly, and two newssheets.